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SUMMER.

BY A. P. M., JR.

Come! come to the fairy quest!
Come where the perfumed shadows fall!
Come where Summer's charms have kissed
The velvet grass and trees so tall.
Bowers of verdure; domes of green;
Fountains of fancy; magic spells;
Dream away
The marmarous day,
Beneath those domes of blended green
Where the whole soul of poetry dwells!

Spring has smiled itself away—
But of beauty so fair to greet!
Summer comes to gild the day,
Making all things in Nature sweet.
Fields and gardens team with fruit,
Hope and Promise go hand in hand;
Earth is gay
As peeped May;
Aloes scents his breezy lute,
And Ceres smiles upon her band.

Seek the rosy vista's bed!
Wander amid the aisles of bloom!
Catch at sunbeams overhead!
Woo the bright dreams that now must come!
Dreams of bliss—of Heaven—of all
That's glad and lovely, or beautiful gleams;
Ambition, Love,
Ay, of Love!
Now's the time for thoughts of all—
No time like Summer for such dreams!

Strangely Wed:

OR,
WHERE WAS ARTHUR CLARE?

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "CECIL'S DE-
CEIT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

PERCY LAMBERT TALKS BUSINESS TO THE
MASTER OF THE TERRACE, AND RECITES
A BALLAD TO THE LADIES.

THERE was a pallid line encircling Mr.
Granville's mouth. His eyes were cast
down, and he sat quite still, as if mentally
revolving the dangerous points in the
other's possession.

Lambert, leaning still upon the mantel-
piece, twined his fingers meditatively in his
luxuriant hair, and contemplated
vacantly with an inexpressive countenance.
Outwardly, the two men were quite un-
moved, except for that blue pallor on the
face of the one. Mr. Granville broke the
silence presently.

"Have you any further revelations to
make?" I presume there is some object to
back the strange tale you have just re-
lated."

"A strange tale, but an over true one.
You can remain non-committal if you
choose, Mr. Granville, only remember the
conclusive proofs I hold in my possession."

Mr. Granville waved his hand with a
slightly impatient gesture.

"I confess to some curiosity regarding
your intentions," he said. "If the medical
certificate be authentic, as you declare, and
not the production of an erratic brain, it
can only prove the sanity of the patient at
the time of its date. To my certain knowl-
edge no such document could have been
witnessed during the latter months of his
illness."

"You are mistaken. Doctors Chalmers
and Greene were called here to consult over
the case. You had no suspicion that Ar-
thur Clare had fathomed your designs. He
was in a critical condition, and together
with your precautions you never relaxed
your seeming zeal in procuring him every
attention. Perhaps real danger sharpened
his mental faculties and lent him strength
to meet and defeat you with concealed
weapons. The two physicians—one of
whom was his regular attendant—displayed
no hesitancy in preparing the document
spoken of, and keeping silence regarding it
afterward. They are both living still, and
had any open charge of insanity been pre-
sented, their testimony would have weighed
down the accusation."

"I have the will in my present posses-
sion. I alone have knowledge of the
whereabouts of the title-deeds and other
proofs of Arthur Clare's inheritance."

"I know moreover that The Terrace and
lands pertaining were heavily incumbered
when you succeeded to them. You have
since freed yourself of all obligations, be-
sides proving lavish in your expenditures
beyond the most prosperous of all pre-
ceding Granvilles."

"A heavy account could be brought
against you, Austin Granville!"

"Is it your intention to assume the ag-
gressive?" queried the latter, with a just-
perceptible sneer.

"That depends," returned Lambert.

"I thought so. Be kind enough to ap-
proach, your point or defer the matter for a
more convenient season. Our time grows
limited."

The utter coolness of the elder man was
matched by the nonchalance of the other.
Their tones had never changed from those
of ordinary conversation, and no excite-
ment was manifested by either.

Lambert changed his position, crossing
his hands upon his back and bending his
face a little toward his host.

"I intend to marry Justine Clare," he
said.

Mr. Granville started slightly. He was
prepared for an exorbitant demand upon
his purse, not for this decision. He was too
politic to betray the sudden anxiety it
caused him.

"I have heard of birds in the bush," he
remarked, sarcastically.



"Ride ye to the Gipsie's camp, and find Walt Lyon. Tell him to bide there yet, and give him this letter."

something new in his experience should he
fail in charming the feminine bird he might
cast his fowler's eye upon.

His host read the meaning of the glance,
and tacitly acknowledged a good reason
for it. He beat a silent tattoo on the
velvet-padded arm of the great chair, and
then leaned forward confidentially.

"Why not marry my daughter, instead?
I have a faint recollection of your childish
preference once displayed. Certainly, it
would not be very difficult to revive it
now."

"Hearts are the playthings of circum-
stances, you know. Truth to tell, Miss
Sylvie is more to my fancy than the little
Justine; but I have found it best policy to
take the equitable side of any case when it
comes as readily to hand."

"I can't say that I approve your wis-
dom," retorted Mr. Granville, with a shrug
of his shoulders. "Justine is an unmanage-
able mix when she is so willed. What
may I expect in the event of your win-
ning?"

"I pledge myself, not to betray you, and
only require that you shall equally dower
the two girls. I have heard your intention
of settling a hundred thousand dollars upon
your daughter upon her marriage-day. Let
Justine's portion be the same, and I am
quite content to leave the remainder under
your management. This, with the under-
standing that you eventually make restora-
tion of the entire amount specified in Ar-
thur Clare's will."

"Your demand is moderate, considering
the facts of the case," sneered Mr. Gran-
ville.

"It is, because you are in my power. I
would not be ungenerous to a fallen foe,
much less so to an active friend."

"I might prove the latter were you to
fall in with my suggestion."

"I believe I am consulting both our in-
terests by doing otherwise. I have a super-
stition that Gerald Fontenay, whoever he
may be, will turn up yet to enforce justice
toward Arthur Clare's child, and I've de-
termined to take the initiative instead. I

have acquainted you fully with my motives
and resolves; we will consult further at an-
other time."

As Lambert ceased speaking there came
a slight clicking sound from the direction
of the curtained window nearest them. Mr.
Granville rose and went to it, drawing back
the curtain and letting the full stream of
light into the slight recess. The casements
were sliding ones, controlled by a spring on
the inner side. They could not be opened
from without, and this one was properly
closed. Nevertheless, Mr. Granville pushed
back the sash and leaned out, watching and
listening.

It was now quite dark, and his eyes, ac-
customed to the full glare of light, could
distinguish nothing but a confused blend-
ing of substance and shadow.

Nothing moved, and he withdrew from
the window, satisfied that the sound was of
no import.

As he turned back into the room, the door
opened to admit Sylvie and Justine, enter-
ing together.

Sylvie had benefited by the half-jesting
advice of the latter, and appeared in a din-
ner dress of pale-blue silk, exquisitely trim-
med with snowy swan's down. The open
corset revealed a lace chemise rarely
worked, with the round white neck rising
from it like snow above snow, and the wide
sleeves flared away from her arms, exquise
in contour and bare except for a single
bracelet of turquoises set in a band of heavy
gold. A pure white lily drooped from her
mass of yellow hair, and another nestled
lovingly in the folds of lace upon her bos-
om.

Justine wore a house dress of ruby pop-
lin. It was trimmed with a fringe of pen-
cil, and she quivered uneasily, tinking
like fairy bells with every motion. A nar-
row fringe of lace edged it at throat and
wrists, and a scarlet ribbon glowed amid the
rings of her dusky hair.

The dinner-bell rung almost simultane-
ously with their entrance. Justine took
her guardian's arm, leaving Lambert free
to escort Sylvie to the dinner-hall.

During the meal he divided his attentions
equally between the two, and when they
retired to the parlors an easy footing had
been established all around.

Sylvie, quiet and graceful, forwarding no
superfluous remarks, but maintaining her
part in the conversation with perfect ease,
was, as he had declared, most after Lambert's
liking. But Justine's saucy speeches and
coquettish spirit rapidly advanced their ac-
quaintance by introducing a wordy spar-
ing-match in which she proved eminently
victorious.

At nine, coffee was brought in, with
fruits and bon-bons.

Several times during the evening Lam-
bert's eyes had been attracted by the singu-
lar ring on Justine's hand, and now as she
toyed with her Dresden china cup after re-
fusing to have it refilled, his glance was ar-
rested again by the unique circlet.

"You are not afraid of opals, I see," he
remarked. "Do you know the superstition
attaching to the gem?"

"I have heard something of a power of
prescience attributed to it," she replied.

"Old tales claim that it brings disappoint-
ment and misfortune to its possessor. Yours,
though, should retain a counter-charm,
fenced in as it is by that barrier of pu-
rity."

Justine glanced down at the opal with
the circle of pure, pale pearls about it. Her
eyes softened to luminous tenderness.

"You can not frighten me, since it repre-
sents the greatest blessedness of my whole
life."

Lambert shot a suspicious glance into her
changed face. He put a question to himself
and answered it in the same instant.

"Can it be the token of some *offense de-
couverte*? Pshaw! that child has never been
troubled with a serious thought in her life,
I verily believe, and if she had, Othello's
occupation would be gone could I not
speedily succeed the reigning ideal."

Aloud, he said:

"I remember an irregular old ballad
which accounts for the origin of the stone
and the meaning attributed to it. Do you

care to hear it, or does poetry bore you,
Miss Clare?"

"Oh, yes and no!" cried Justine. "The
gem is a poem in itself, and if your ballad is
half so sweet it shall claim an abiding place
in my memory."

For the time she had thrown away her
jesting manner. Any thing pertaining to
her precious ring, the gift of her lover hus-
band, was sacred to her.

Lambert repeated:

"A ladye sate in bower fair:
A knight bowed lowly at her knee;
Love, tender child, looked down and smiled,
Upon their troth-plight given free."

"The knight unrope from bended knee,
Sweet love, a token gave to me:
An amulet to ward off harm,
A shield, a gift to nerve my arm,
When forth I haste to war's alarm."

"Then Love looked down with gentle sigh
To note the moisture in her eye,
The ladye she severed a golden tree,
And pressed to her lips with fond caress."

"Love fluttered near and swept the tear
With downy wing, a glist'ning thing,
And prisoned it within the ring."

"It caught a ray from burning sun:
It took a gleam from bright-blue sky,
It held a heart of blue-wright flame,
With tender spark like living eye."

"Oh, love, dear love," the ladye spoke,
An amulet I give to thee:
It shall abide till troth be broke,
Which we have plighted—these and me."

"While it shall glow with blue-bright flame,
My love endureth still the same,
And till it pales, thy love for me
Shall keep thee still from all harm free."

"The ladye sate in bower fair:
The knight was on the battlefield,
An earl bespoke the lady's hand:
And to his pleadings did she yield."

"And Love, the child, no longer smiled,
But trembled over grief so wild,
The amulet had lost its charm,
Unswayed was the knight's strong arm."

"The opal's heart of living glow,
Grew pale, died out—and faith lay low,
The knight was borne down on the field,
His life-blood stained the faithless shield."

"Love fluttered low, and swept his brow
With fragrant wing. Love caught the ring—
The dead ring, pining, tell-tale thing."

"My ladye sate in bower fair:
With whitened cheek and heavy eye;
The earl, grown weary of her mood,
No longer raptured lingered by."

"Love, fitful thing, on joyless wing,
Drooped low and gave her back the ring:
The ladye sate in bower fair,
The opal's heart was stained with red."

"The earl returning to her side,
There found the ladye cold and dead,
And in the opal's heart to-day
Lingers the faith she cast away."

"While it shall gleam with blue-bright glow,
But when it waxes pale in hue,
It speaks of troth-plight proven untrue,
Of broken vows and faith laid low!"

Lambert's voice was musical and his re-
citation impressive, investing the ballad with
an interest apart from its subject, and quaint
rhythm. No one broke the silence for a mo-
ment after he concluded.

Then there came a crash and a heavy jar
that shook the house to its foundation.
They started to their feet and looked at
each other in amazed wonderment.

CHAPTER V.

ART LYON CREATES A SENSATION.

THE two girls had scarcely disappeared
from sight of the rude hut in the vicinity of
the woodland, with its singular inhabitant,
when the tangled underbrush which fringed
the wood in an opposite direction from that
taken by them was broken through by the
impetuous advance of an approaching per-
son.

This proved to be a youth of about eigh-
teen years. He strode up to the smoldering
fire, and stood glowering down into it with
moody gaze.

His hair was jet black and straight, and
worn long enough to fall about his bare
brown neck. His eyes were dark and his
skin swarthy, browned and hardened by
much exposure to sun and wind, with full
scarlet lips, whose vivid coloring went far
to enhance the wild beauty of his face.
His features were regular, but high cheek-
bones and the general cast of his physiog-
nomy betrayed, at a glance, his Gipsy ori-
gin.

An empty gamebag hung by his side, and
he had rested an old musket against the
wall of the hut as he passed it. His jacket
of black velvet had facings of scarlet
silk, and his shirt of red flannel was fine
and soft; he wore a black velvet cap and
trowsers of dark striped stuff. Altogether
his apparel, though scuffed and weather-
stained, was jaunty beyond the ordinary
wear of a common Gipsy.

The old woman came out of the low
doorway and resumed her task of stirring
the steaming, savory mess in the swinging
kettle. She cast furtive, searching glances
toward the dark-skinned youth, but did not
immediately address him.

There was a marked resemblance between
the two, though nothing in the woman's
appearance stamped her as belonging to the
race from which he unmistakably descended.

"Were there neither squirrels in the
wood nor birds in the field that ye should
come back empty-handed?" she asked, at
length, seeing that he had no intention of
breaking silence. "Or is youth no longer
ambitious to surprise the covey when better
game is scented in the air?"

"Ay, better game," broke out the youth,
half-fiercely. "It's what ye've promised
me long, mother Naome. Better game, ye
said, when we left the tribe and took to
haunting these woods a twelvemonth ago."

"Ye know how we've dodged the land-

owners since that; how we've laid low in the covers, and fled away like hunted mice when discovery threatened us; how our people have followed their route without us except when their camping-ground was within two days' tramp of here. Always, wherever we have been, ye have kept a backward look upon this place. At yer bidding I've prowled about the great house beyond there till I know their out-comings and in-goings almost to the minutes o' clock-work. I've got their customs for day or dark, and I've marked the lights in the house o' rights, till I could find my way to the rooms they use or to the ones that are mostly dark at any hour of the whole twenty-four.

"I reckon, if they'd seen the Gipsy tramp hanging around, they'd have looked to their bolts and bars closer yet; but for all o' that, their poultry-yard has never lost so much as a feather. Ye have made them safe, though ye are always foretelling better game and bidding me look to a great reward."

"Ye have talked of the duty I owe ye, and of a purpose which concerns us both; yet ye keep me in the dark while ye make no move nor show of one."

"I am tired of the watch-dog life ye would have me lead. I am tired of lying in wait with no quarry ever coming to sight. I want to go back to my own people with no restriction on my acts."

"Ye are breeding mischief in me, I tell ye. I've watched them up there with their table loaded down with silver, with their silks and their jewels all agleam in the broad lights, and I've ached as I saw chance after chance slip by when I could have made myself rich with their treasure."

"Ye know we are not thieves. My people claim the right of a living off the world, and we account it no crime to snare the rabbits in any man's wood or to help ourselves now and then to a fat pullet off the roost; but I never took a man's money out of his purse or so much as a crust ungiven from his house. But this teaching o' yers is dragging all the bad that is in me to the top."

"Ye may be own kin of mine, Mother Naome, but ye are not of Gipsy blood as I am. Ye may have the right, but ye have not the power to keep me longer from my tribe. I have served ye long and faithfully in the manner ye saw fit, but I will act no more with a fillet bound over my eyes."

He turned his defiant face toward her with the fires of excitement and determination burning in his eyes.

"Why, Art, Art, lad, what has come over ye? Have I not told ye that the time I have watched and waited for is at hand? It's not the watch-dog ye've played, lad. It's the part of the sleuth-hound that follows silent, night, and day—follows on, never pausing and never wearying till the prey is in sight. Would ye give up at the last and never taste of the vengeance ye have sought? I have no Gipsy blood, ye say; yet is yers thinner and colder if ye turn yer back on the Gipsy's boast to let no injury go unpaid."

"The tale of yer wrongs is no new one to ye. Yer father was thrown in a felon's cell, yer mother died of a broken heart. Yet ye would let the man who brought such grief to ye flourish in his wickedness. The more shame to ye, then, Art Lyon!"

"Cast no shame to me where ye have held back my hand," retorted the youth, sullenly. "I've besought ye for the chance of vengeance, but while ye fostered my passion for revenge, ye have withheld the knowledge that would enable me to wreak it. Show me the man who worked me that ill, and ye'll not taunt me twice with inaction."

"Ay, and yer hot blood would bring ye into trouble, and me to more sorrow in my old age. Trust me, and ye shall aim a blow that will be keener than knife-thrust, and yerself shall go scathless. What made ye so impatient now, Art, lad?"

"Our people are ready for their journey to the South, and I've no liking either for these bleak woods or for Northern snows. Unless ye can show good reason for keeping me here, I go with them in two days more."

"Will ye not heed me, lad? I tell ye the time for work is nigh at hand. We have not been keeping watch on the fine house up there for naught."

"As ye say," grumbled the young Gipsy, his face lowering and sullen still. "They'll be having feasting and jollity with the holiday cheer ahead o' them, and a guest on the road—a fine gentleman, whose hand would be defiled by touch of mine. Heaven send that his heart be as fair!"

He spread out his brown rough palms with a short laugh as he spoke. The old woman's eye caught a gleam of renewed animation.

"Say ye so? A guest bound to The Terrace—a man with fair hair, and a white skin, and a haughty look?"

"Ay, Mother Naome."

"Then ye must act—act! Talk not of leaving the pursuit, now that the game is in full view before ye! There is work for ye, Art, this very night."

"I'll not go at it blindfold, Mother Naome! Give me yer reasons and show me yer object, and I'll do my best for ye; but I'll not be bounded on by a word with no understanding to me."

"Anon, anon!" said the old woman, and turning abruptly, went into the hut again.

She came out presently with a large earthen dish in her hand, into which she ladled a portion of the contents of the kettle. She carried it within, and in a moment more called the young Gipsy to partake of the frugal meal.

It was nearing evening when he emerged from the hut, and avoiding the more frequented paths, made his way toward The Terrace. He advanced rapidly until he reached the immediate grounds surrounding the mansion. Then he approached more stealthily, keeping within shadow of the shrubbery, avoiding both the terrace-steps and the winding carriage-drive.

The fading outer light flickered up the walls, and while he hovered in concealment the ruddy glow of lights within streamed through the curtained casements. He crept close, and at last stood fairly within shadow of the walls.

He could distinctly hear the sound of voices, and moving silently, he paused beneath a window which was slightly ajar—probably left so by the housemaid for freer ventilation, when she cleansed the rooms, and forgotten afterward.

It opened into the room where Percy Lambert was confronting Austin Granville with a recital of those dubious acts of his in times past.

The Gipsy, crouching beneath the casement, heard it all. His position was cramped and uncomfortable, but he never moved until Lambert ceased to speak. Then he straightened himself and stepped back, but a round pebble-stone turned under his foot, and throwing out his hand involuntarily, he struck the window-sash with a force that slid it into place with a sudden click.

He had the presence of mind to throw himself flat upon his face on the ground. He lay there scarcely breathing while Austin Granville leaned out of the window above him. When the latter had withdrawn he raised himself cautiously, keeping still within shadow of the walls.

Previous vigils had acquainted him fully with the habits of the household. He could see the glare of light from the dining-hall, and soon the rattle of dishes and movin' shadows in waiting, assured him that the inmates were assembled around the board.

Then he darted forward and in at a back entrance-way. It opened into the laundry, beyond which was a vista of lighted kitchen, pantries and cook-room. Servants were moving back and forth with the different courses, for they lived in true aristocratic style at The Terrace, and never a dinner that occupied less than a couple of hours was served there.

There was no chance of successfully running the gamut of these lighted rooms for the time; and Art, watching his opportunity, concealed himself in a pantry which opened from the laundry into the cook-room. He remained there full three hours. It was not until coffee had been taken into the drawing-room that the butler locked up the domestic departments, and with those under him in service adjourned to the house-keeper's room for the remainder of the evening.

Then Art left his hiding-place, feeling his way cautiously through the darkness. He carried an assortment of keys, and had no difficulty in fitting them to the various locks he encountered on his way.

He paused at the drawing-room door listening for a moment, but moved on swiftly and silently when assured that all were engrossed there.

He had not boasted idly when he declared that he could find his way to any point within the house, and now advanced straight to the room he sought, which was known as the Old Library. It partook more of the nature of a museum, the only volumes found here having some peculiar interest attaching to them aside from their intrinsic merits, such as antiquity or rarity, and contained huge old-fashioned cabinets, filled with natural curiosities gathered from all points of the globe.

The young Gipsy had made his way here through utter darkness, but now he struck a match and lighted a bit of candle-end he carried about him. It cast a flickering, dim light, but sufficient for his purpose. Holding it aloft he sent a searching glance around the room, and without hesitation singled out one of the cabinets ranged against the walls.

It was of peculiar formation, broad and low, with two sprawling feet of bronze that had been golden, but was green now and tarnished with age. He put his hand upon it, and applying all his force moved it painfully out from the niche it had occupied. It was heavier even than its appearance indicated; but this was explained when Art swung back the doors in the front and exposed its compartments filled with mineral specimens. After a cursory glance he shut the doors securely again, and pushing with all his strength succeeded in moving it quite clear of the wall.

It was almost square, the sides and back cut in deep panels. They were crusted over with cobwebs and dust; evidently it had been long since it was moved from the niche it fitted.

Art waited a moment, listening intently. But the sounds he had unavoidably made in moving the heavy piece of furniture, attracted no attention from any of the household.

He brushed the cobwebs from the back and examined it closely by the dim light. Then he counted the panels, sounding the one which occupied the center. It gave back a hollow echo.

Passing his finger up and down he discovered a minute keyhole scarcely discernible in the dark wood. He selected the smaller keys from the collection he carried, and tried them one after another.

One tiny brass key apparently fitted, but some complication of the lock would not yield to it. He tried again and again, but with the same unsatisfactory result.

He ceased the fruitless effort and remained for a moment plunged in deep thought.

Then he went to the door, locking it on the inner side with the key he had used in gaining entrance. He opened a window wide, and turning with a sudden rush, sprung against the cabinet. It tottered on its sprawling feet, and fell with a crash that awakened resounding echoes through the house.

It had seemed his only expedient, and it proved successful. The solid mahogany of the back was split from top to bottom. He stooped over it, and with a little pressure succeeded in removing the center panel from its place. It revealed a shallow cavity, with a flat jappaned box fitted into it.

Hastily Art secured the box, and sprung toward the open window. He could hear the sound of scurrying feet, that came nearer with every instant.

In a moment the door was flung open and Mr. Granville appeared in it, with an array of anxious and frightened faces at his back.

Mr. Granville had located the sound which so unexpectedly startled them as proceeding from the Old Library. He hurried there followed by Lambert and the two girls, with the house-servants forming into line and bringing up the rear. The house-keeper was among them, with the keys dangling from her belt; thus the locked door scarcely delayed them.

The shattered cabinet lay upon the floor with its contents scattered. Ejaculations of surprise and many improbable suggestions greeted the sight, but a careful survey of the room afforded no explanation of the mystery as it appeared.

"After all, there is no harm done," said Mr. Granville. "The old cabinet was of little value, and its contents seem all safe, though shaken out of place. Its mysterious fall is the worst phase of the affair. Even a defect which might cause the bronzes to give way would scarcely result in this manner."

Percy Lambert, who had been stooping over the ruins, now rose up, not speaking a word, but with a baffled look upon his face. He had ascertained that the jappaned box containing the title-deeds of Arthur Clare's estates—the proofs of which he supposed he alone possessed the knowledge—had disappeared from its place of concealment!

His blank expression might have attracted remark, but for Sylvie's sudden exclamation:

"Justine, dear child, what is the matter? You look as though you had seen a ghost."

"So I have—of spirits departed," returned Justine, stooping to recover a curiously wrought metallic drinking-flask from the floor, where it had fallen. When the others saw her face it had lost the startled pallor which attracted Sylvie's observation, and so no questions were pressed upon her.

The truth was she had seen Art's face without the pane, and with her recklessness of consequences, resolved that her act should not betray a fellow-creature, though escaping, perhaps, from the punishment merited by a culpable deed.

The Gipsy said that she had discovered him, and loosening his hold, dropped to the ground. There was a thick turf beneath the window, and in a moment he had recovered his footing and was racing away through the terrace grounds toward the tangled park.

CHAPTER VI

AUSTIN GRANVILLE AND PERCY LAMBERT HOLD A MIDNIGHT PARLEY.

PERCY LAMBERT stood before the open, glowing fire in the room which had been assigned him. It was midnight, and he had parted from his host an hour before, but no inclination to slumber had come upon him.

A disturbing influence was at work in his mind. The fall of the cabinet, which to the others was only a mysterious circumstance, assumed the shape of a formidable calamity to him.

He had kept his own counsel, determining to clear two points to his own satisfaction before deciding upon his course or taking another into his confidence.

First: who aside from himself knew the secret of the jappaned box, and—by the rule of deduction—now held it in possession?

Second: would Austin Granville, knowing the loss of these proofs, still co-operate with him, as without the knowledge he could not refuse to do?

The young Gipsy had made his way here through utter darkness, but now he struck a match and lighted a bit of candle-end he carried about him. It cast a flickering, dim light, but sufficient for his purpose. Holding it aloft he sent a searching glance around the room, and without hesitation singled out one of the cabinets ranged against the walls.

It was of peculiar formation, broad and low, with two sprawling feet of bronze that had been golden, but was green now and tarnished with age. He put his hand upon it, and applying all his force moved it painfully out from the niche it had occupied. It was heavier even than its appearance indicated; but this was explained when Art swung back the doors in the front and exposed its compartments filled with mineral specimens. After a cursory glance he shut the doors securely again, and pushing with all his strength succeeded in moving it quite clear of the wall.

It was almost square, the sides and back cut in deep panels. They were crusted over with cobwebs and dust; evidently it had been long since it was moved from the niche it fitted. He brushed the cobwebs from the back and examined it closely by the dim light. Then he counted the panels, sounding the one which occupied the center. It gave back a hollow echo.

Passing his finger up and down he discovered a minute keyhole scarcely discernible in the dark wood. He selected the smaller keys from the collection he carried, and tried them one after another.

One tiny brass key apparently fitted, but some complication of the lock would not yield to it. He tried again and again, but with the same unsatisfactory result.

He ceased the fruitless effort and remained for a moment plunged in deep thought.

Then he went to the door, locking it on the inner side with the key he had used in gaining entrance. He opened a window wide, and turning with a sudden rush, sprung against the cabinet. It tottered on its sprawling feet, and fell with a crash that awakened resounding echoes through the house.

It had seemed his only expedient, and it proved successful. The solid mahogany of the back was split from top to bottom. He stooped over it, and with a little pressure succeeded in removing the center panel from its place. It revealed a shallow cavity, with a flat jappaned box fitted into it.

Hastily Art secured the box, and sprung toward the open window. He could hear the sound of scurrying feet, that came nearer with every instant.

In a moment the door was flung open and Mr. Granville appeared in it, with an array of anxious and frightened faces at his back.

Mr. Granville had located the sound which so unexpectedly startled them as proceeding from the Old Library. He hurried there followed by Lambert and the two girls, with the house-servants forming into line and bringing up the rear. The house-keeper was among them, with the keys dangling from her belt; thus the locked door scarcely delayed them.

The shattered cabinet lay upon the floor with its contents scattered. Ejaculations of surprise and many improbable suggestions greeted the sight, but a careful survey of the room afforded no explanation of the mystery as it appeared.

"After all, there is no harm done," said Mr. Granville. "The old cabinet was of little value, and its contents seem all safe, though shaken out of place. Its mysterious fall is the worst phase of the affair. Even a defect which might cause the bronzes to give way would scarcely result in this manner."

Percy Lambert, who had been stooping over the ruins, now rose up, not speaking a word, but with a baffled look upon his face. He had ascertained that the jappaned box containing the title-deeds of Arthur Clare's estates—the proofs of which he supposed he alone possessed the knowledge—had disappeared from its place of concealment!

His blank expression might have attracted remark, but for Sylvie's sudden exclamation:

"Justine, dear child, what is the matter? You look as though you had seen a ghost."

"So I have—of spirits departed," returned Justine, stooping to recover a curiously wrought metallic drinking-flask from the floor, where it had fallen. When the others saw her face it had lost the startled pallor which attracted Sylvie's observation, and so no questions were pressed upon her.

The truth was she had seen Art's face without the pane, and with her recklessness of consequences, resolved that her act should not betray a fellow-creature, though escaping, perhaps, from the punishment merited by a culpable deed.

The Gipsy said that she had discovered him, and loosening his hold, dropped to the ground. There was a thick turf beneath the window, and in a moment he had recovered his footing and was racing away through the terrace grounds toward the tangled park.

CHAPTER VII

THE FAIR KNIGHT WOOS WITHOUT WINNING—JUSTINE VISITS OLD NAOME.

THE conviction that he will bring trouble to us yet, and the events of this evening have served to strengthen the impression."

"How can that be?" queried Mr. Granville, in astonishment.

"The overthrow of that cabinet was no accident, and certainly not the result of any defect in the workmanship. The proofs of Arthur Clare's inheritance were concealed in a secret aperture in its back, but they have been removed. It is my firm belief that either Gerald Fonteney himself, or an emissary of his, has been in your house for some time, and succeeded in obtaining the box containing the papers."

Mr. Granville started to his feet with a sharp ejaculation.

"Why did you not tell me that before?" he demanded.

"Of what use would it have been?" asked Lambert, quietly.

"What use? We might have followed the intruder, whoever he was, or cut off his escape and secured the proofs."

"Do you imagine that any one would penetrate your house and gain possession of the box by such audacity of action without being well provided with means of escape?"

No doubt, with the few minutes start gained, the best force and closest search would have failed in establishing a correct pursuit."

Mr. Granville sunk back into his seat.

"Does it not strike you that this may change the aspect of affairs?" he asked.

"It should urge us to speedier action," said Lambert. "It is not necessary to remind you that I hold the will and the physician's certificate, both powerful instruments, and with the evidence I could gather capable of ruining you. But, to prevent interference, it is necessary that one of us should have legal control of Justine's rightful inheritance. I, as her husband, would have that authority."

"I have it, as her guardian."

"No, for you were self-appointed. The letter in my possession assigns her and her property to the charge of Gerald Fonteney. There is only one way for it, Mr. Granville. I must marry Justine without delay."

And if she should oppose such a course?" said her guardian, doubtfully.

"What then?"

"I think I can overrule any opposition she may make," returned Lambert, with a confident half-smile. "She is too young to have a prior attachment, and from my observation, is headstrong enough to be ripe for any romantic mode of love-making I may forward."

"I hope you are right," said Mr. Granville, thoughtfully. "I believe you are, in but a little incident, of which you shall judge, troubled me considerably once."

"It happened about a year ago, and soon after Justine's return from boarding-school. Sylvie was absent at the time and Justine had no restrictions placed upon her. She spent much of her time out of doors, running wild over the place as you might say, but I thought nothing of it until one evening, after she had been gone during the afternoon, I observed on her hand the opal ring which she still wears."

"That gave me an idea that her wanderings might not have been without an object. I questioned her regarding the ring, but she would only rail laughingly at man's inquisitive nature, and declared that her good fairy had given it to her as a talisman."

"I thought she might have picked up a secret lover, by some means; and, after that, I had her closely watched for a time, but without having my suspicion verified."

Lambert twisted his fingers through his long whiskers abstractedly. This mystery connected with the ring made Justine's evident fondness of it food for more vague uneasiness than he had before this given it. But, with the not unpardonable egotism which characterized the man, he believed that, even should the opal ring prove a token of pledged affection, he would find no difficulty in eradicating the former impression.

"Rather a suspicious look about the affair," he said, brightly, "but we had better reserve our energies for such tangible obstacles as may come in our way, rather than devote them to the contemplation of a mere possibility."

Little more was said before they parted for the remaining hours of darkness. Though not trusting him implicitly, Lambert felt sure that his host was sincere in the concessions he had made.

The young Gipsy, Art Lyon, sped on his way through the tangled woodpaths, scarcely slackening his speed even after assuring himself that no pursuit had been instituted.

Sure-footed and nimble as any wild denizen of the wood, he ran on in the direction of the little hut. It was densely dark; no glimmer of starlight could penetrate the boughs interwoven above him, yet at the wild rate he was going he had traversed almost the entire distance to the hut.

He checked his pace to a rapid walk as he began to descend the hill above it. Some roots stretching across the path had been washed bare by the fall rains. His foot caught upon one that had loosened entirely from the soil, and he pitched forward headlong.

He sprang up, to fall back again with a groan of agony. His ankle-joint had been wrenched fairly from its socket.

CHAPTER VII

THE FAIR KNIGHT WOOS WITHOUT WINNING—JUSTINE VISITS OLD NAOME.

JUSTINE was leaving the breakfast-room next morning when her guardian called her back.

"Can I see you in half an hour, my dear, in my study?"

"I will be there," said Justine, wondering a little at the request.

"I'm in for a lecture for some breach of etiquette, I presume," she said, pointing to Sylvie. "I wonder if I'll never get beyond the age of being scolded?"

"I wonder if you'll never get beyond the age of deserving it," laughed Sylvie.

"What mischief have you been doing more than ordinary?"

"On my word as a sedate damsel, I've not the slightest idea, unless it should be the chase you gave me yesterday."

"That I gave you?" exclaimed Sylvie.

"Of course. Didn't you follow me up?"

If that wasn't giving me the chase, what was it, I should like to know? Gaudy looks cloudy this morning, so I suppose the chase was a portentous one."

"Papa never found fault with me in his life," said Sylvie, "and I'm sure he'll not be hard with you, if he is obliged to remonstrate with you for some of your whimsical acts. You are just like a kitten, Justine, as frolicsome and thoughtless."

"Then I might be left alone to sober into a demure old babby in my own good time! But, the idea of any one finding fault with you—preposterous! Why, I don't believe you ever committed an unconventional act in your life, Saint Sylvie. Now, I must break bounds sometimes to let some of the original sin that is in me effervesce. I think there's a hidden germ somewhere that continues to work upon my inner nature like yeast rather than soda-pop; or, do you find me after my innocent gambols, flat, stale and unprofitable?"

"There, chatterbox, run away. You will keep papa waiting, and surely his time is of more account than your nonsense."

"Flatterer! I'll come to you when I want to 'see myself as others see me.'"

She ran down the stairway with a saucy laugh, and tapped at the study door. Mr. Granville's voice bade her enter, and she went in with little fear of the storm she had prognosticated manifested in her demeanor.

He half-rose, motioning her to a chair, and then looked away through the window irresolute as to how he should introduce his subject.

Justine dropped into the place indicated with a demure expression on her face, but with a half-concealed smile dimpling the corners of her mouth, and a dancing, defiant light in her downcast eyes. She looked like a naughty child that took delight in its own mischief.

Mr. Granville turned toward her with a smiling face.

"How should you like to be turned over to another guardian, Justine?" he asked, attempting a jocose tone. "I have had a proposal to that effect, and it has become necessary to defer the matter to you."

Justine's eyes opened wide in astonishment.

"Another guardian!" she echoed. "Who? When? How?"

"Telling questions," he laughed, "but you must give me time to answer them in my own way. The proposed guardianship is that which a husband would exercise over you."

Justine clasped her little hands tightly. A glow of excitement flushed her face, and with lips slightly parted and luminous eyes fixed eagerly upon him, she awaited his further speech.

A husband! The words thrilled her through and through. Her husband—was he coming to claim her now?

"Who, when, and how, you asked, my dear," continued Mr. Granville. "The last question I have answered first, and the other two can be settled in a breath. It is Percy Lambert aspires to the honor, and the sooner it is conferred upon him the better he will like it."

The eager expectancy in Justine's face changed to an expression of blank disappointment.

"It must appear to you as a premature conclusion," her guardian proceeded. "For that reason I thought it best to broach the subject before permitting him to plead his own cause."

"He is waiting to do so, however, and you must hear him before permitting your mind to be influenced toward any conclusion."

He rose, and led her to the library, which was separated from the study by folding-doors. Taken completely by surprise, Justine did not collect her faculties until she found herself face to face and alone with Percy Lambert.

He advanced to meet her, and drew her down by his side on a lounge of crimson satin. He appeared eager and solicitous without being importunate; tender and entreating, yet confident withal. It had grown an axiom with him that a man who manifests belief in his ultimate success is most sure to attain it.

"What am I to expect, Justine?" he asked. "I'm afraid I'm being guilty of a gross impudence in setting society's mandates at defiance as I have done. I am a fatalist, and my heart tells me that I have met my destiny in you. I might have waited months before telling you this, but I am as well satisfied now as if years of intimate acquaintance had assured me of it. Will you be my wife, Justine?"

"Mr. Lambert," she cried, indignation struggling with amazement, "your method of courtship is certainly a strange one. Since you have conferred the favor of your choice upon me, it only remains for me to decline the intended honor, with thanks!"

She drew herself away from him, and rose, dropping a courtesy of mock humiliation.

"Justine—Miss Clare! Permit me to assure you that you will reconsider that decision. I believe you destined to be my wife, and so strong is my conviction, that I shall employ every energy to accomplish that result, and I have very great confidence in my powers of achievement."

"Mr. Lambert, permit me to assure you that I am not in the habit of succumbing to any powers, not even the very potent one of fate or destiny. I believe emphatically in bending fate to will. For your simple edification, let me assure you that I will never marry. I wish you better success in the next enterprise you may attempt, and hope your affections may be changeable as they have proved themselves easily placed."

"That is impossible," he replied, gravely, as she swept past him.

"It's like an act in a melo-drama," said Justine to herself, her hand yet upon the knob of the door closed between them. "I think I threw true dramatic force into my assertion that I shall never marry; and I never shall, since I don't propose laying myself liable to a charge of bigamy, and—with a sudden catch of her breath—"I never will be any one's wife but Gerald's!"

She encountered her guardian in the hall, and was convinced in her mind that he had awaited her there.

"Am I to congratulate you?" he asked.

"Yes; at possessing wisdom enough to retain my liberty."

"I feared

which tried to shadow the sky of my future peace. I've done my share in disposing of the fair knight, and turn him over to your tender mercies for all future benefits."

"Don't use metaphors if you mean me to understand you, Justine," said Sylvie.

"Plain English and unpalatable truth then, my darling. Mr. Percy Lambert did me the honor to propose for my hand, and I have unequivocally rejected him; that's all. Will you ride to-day, Sylvie?"

"Not to-day, dear," returned Sylvie, with slight constraint in her voice.

"Have you one of your headaches, Sylvie?" inquired Justine, solicitously. "I did not observe before that you were pale, or I would not have disturbed you. Shall I bathe your head with eau de Cologne, dear?"

"No, thank you; and don't let my indisposition detain you."

Justine withdrew softly, leaving her friend alone. Poor Sylvie had just awakened to a realizing knowledge that the partiality of her childhood had grown up and strengthened with her maturing years, made consciously sweet in this brief interval by the belief that Lambert also remembered his old preference, and Justine's revelation came like a sharp blow to her confiding trust.

Justine donned her riding-habit, and went out to the stables. She saddled Lady Bess with her own hands, and led her forth, when Mace made his appearance.

"Why didn't you order her brought round, Miss Justine?" he asked. "I can get Selim ready in a couple of minutes, though."

"Thank you, Mace; but you need not attend me to-day. Tell your master that was my order."

"Ay, ay," grumbled Mace, as she rode away. "And if your blessed neck be broke through leaping of bars and racing down of ravines, your order won't save me from being discharged for lack of duty."

Justine took her way by a roundabout bridle-path to the little hut she had discovered on the preceding day. The smoke from the outdoor fire crawled lazily up, as it had done then, but no one was in sight as she approached.

She came nearer the rude dwelling; but, before she had quite reached it, Mother Naome emerged from the low doorway.

"What would ye?" she asked, in her harsh tones. "Did I not tell you truly? Yet ye laughed at old Naome and her prophecies. Did the stars foretell truth, or were they false as earthly promises?"

"I'm quite assured of your verity, good Mistress Witch, and have come to make the amende honorable, if you know what that is," cried Justine, gayly. "You hit the nail so exactly on the head, if you'll pardon my using flash phrases, that I'm really quite curious to know who comes next upon the programme."

"You see, I have already disposed of one of the lovers you allotted me yesterday, and I'm quite anxious to know when I may expect the appearance of the other."

The old woman regarded her sternly.

"There's a time for mirth, and a time to weep," she began.

"Solomon said something of that sort, once upon a time," interpolated Justine.

"Ay, and there's a precipice opened out before ye, and there's danger all around. There are enemies creeping close, and there are plotters at work; and ye are blind to it all."

"Oh, no horrors, an' ye love—my money," cried Justine, fumbling for her portemonnaie. "Sorry I can't cross your palm with gold, as I believe that is equivalent to propitiating destiny; but it's a thing impossible in this degenerate age of greenbacks."

"Put back yer money—I want it not," said Mother Naome. "Mark ye, there are four times ahead. There are enemies that ye know not of, and there are hidden friends. Heed and obey if you would escape the dangers that menace ye."

"My good Dame Witch, I am proverbial for my submissive spirit, so it only remains for you to speak—if you think it worth while. When the fates give utterance, mortal will must be held in abeyance."

"Mock not at that which ye understand not," said Naome, commandingly. "I tell ye there are secrets behind and snares ahead. Listen! There is a bride who is not a wife; she wears a ring, but she wears not her husband's name; she looks for him and waits for him, but he comes not, and others are on the track to bring trouble home to both. Ay, ye heed me now."

"If you know that, you must know more," cried Justine, eagerly. "Oh, tell me of my husband!"

"I can tell ye nothing. Ye laugh at my warnings and scoff at the wisdom which would guide ye; so run yer course and repent when ye are tripped by the way, and there is no succor at hand."

Old Naome stood grim and stern, with her eyes fixed upon the young girl.

"Oh, please," cried Justine, pleadingly.

"If you know Gerald—if you can tell me of him, or if you come from him, I'll do any thing you say."

Justine's face turned pale as she wistfully gazed. She slipped her portemonnaie, a glittering combination of velvet and steel, into the woman's hand.

"Ay, ay!" mumbled Naome to herself. "I've known yer very like, and woe betide if ye be as fickle and changing."

"Then heed ye," she said aloud. "The Gipsies' camp is ten mile from here in the Danver wood. Ride ye there and ask for Walt Lyon. Tell him ye came from Naome, and that they must not break camp until I send him further word. Tell him—"

She stopped to consider. "I'll write it," she said. "Wait ye here."

She disappeared within the hut. Justine awaited without, unconscious that a pair of bright black eyes were peering at her through the interstices of the logs.

The Gipsy, Art Lyon, lay on a rude pallet, his swarthy face flushed with the fever induced by the pain of his dislocated ankle. Naome had put it in place and splinted it skillfully. There was no need of surgical aid; her knowledge of simple rules and medicinal herbs being ample for such an emergency; but the untamed spirit of the youth chafed at the confinement to which he was obliged to submit. He spoke to Naome in a voice too low to reach the girl without.

"It was she who saw me as I hung like a bat to the wall up at the place, there; and she never screamed nor sent them after me. If she were only a Gipsy now—Did she give ye that?"

He caught sight of the portemonnaie in Naome's hand. She tossed it toward him with a softer look on her hard face.

"A toy for ye while ye lay there," she said. "That girl on the horse out there is

the cause o' yer grief, and ye should get what comfort ye can of her. She's Foncey's wife, lad!"

He fondled the pretty pocketpiece in his rough, brown palms, and turned to peer out again at the tiny figure, with the saucy face grown grave and tender, with the soft, dark hair blown in rings beneath the coquettish riding-hat, with its long scarlet plume.

The old woman found a greasy note-book and a stump of lead pencil, and scrawled a few lines. She tore off the leaf, folded it, and was going out, when Art called her back.

"It's but a light purse," he said, "but it may make her friends. Bid her give the money to our little lads or the little ones."

He emptied its contents into Naome's hand, but kept the portemonnaie.

She returned to Justine then, repeating the instructions he had already given her.

"Ride ye to the Gipsies' camp, and find Walt Lyon. Tell him to bide there yet, and give him this; and if ye who are so free with yer providence would turn it to yer own account and mine, let it go amid the Gipsy people."

"But will you not tell me of Gerald?" pleaded Justine. "Have you not so much as one little word for me? some assurance from him?"

"Is this yer faith?" questioned Naome, sternly. "Did ye not vow to trust him? Bide yer time, and if ye be no less true than he, there's hope for ye yet."

And with that Justine was forced to be contented.

It is needless to follow her to the Gipsy camping-ground. Let it suffice that her mission was faithfully accomplished.

It was quite dark when she rode up the winding drive to The Terrace. She found the household in a state of great alarm at her long absence, with Mace—sulky at the blame which had been laid to him—prepared to scour the neighborhood in quest of her.

At dinner she learned that Lambert had taken his departure for an interval, but Mr. Granville hinted that he might return again in the course of a few days.

(To be continued—Continued in No. 123.)

The Surf Angel: OR, THE HERMIT WRECKER.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.
AUTHOR OF "THE DOUBLED DUEL," "THE ROSA EAST LIFE," "THE PIRATE," "SOUTHERNERS IN NEW YORK," "A WRECKED LIFE," "DOOMED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IX. THE DUEL.

Six weeks had elapsed since the departure of Captain Menken and his party, and having determined to leave the island and go to New York to seek his fortune, Milo told Ricardo and Theone of his intention, and of the reasons that prompted him to take the step.

Ricardo listened to him quietly, and then, while the tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks, bade him go, with his blessing, and promised if Milo deemed it best for Theone and himself to leave the island, to come on to New York and join him there.

Thus it was arranged, and one pleasant day in summer the Hermit Wrecker and his adopted children went aboard the sloop, and set sail for the coast where a good landing could be made.

Here Milo left them, with many words of affection, and as he kissed Theone good-bye, he bade her to remember that before long he would again see her, and that there was one in New York who dearly loved her, and would long for her coming.

Theone blushed, for she knew whom Milo referred to, and having thought over in her mind her true feelings as regarded her lover and Milo, she was compelled to admit that though she loved the latter dearly, the former held as strong a claim upon her affections, and of a different nature her regard for Leo certainly was, from that she held for her adopted brother.

Leaving Ricardo and Theone to return to the island, Milo took a vehicle which he had procured at a small village, and drove to the railroad, and then took the train for Mobile.

From that city he went to New Orleans, where he remained two days, and just after dark on the evening in which he intended to depart for New York, he was hurrying along the street toward his hotel, when he suddenly came upon no other personage than Leo Menken.

A warm greeting passed between them, and then Milo learned that Captain Menken, in another yacht, which he had purchased immediately upon his return to New York, was then near the city, and that Lotta was also on board with her father.

"I came up to town yesterday to receive and mail letters, and am to start back in the morning, but now wish to unfold to you a rare piece of villainy on the part of Oregon Minturn," continued Leo, after having explained to Milo his appearance in New York.

"Upon my arrival here," he went on, "I met Payne, one of the crew of the Sea Gull, and he informed me that Oregon Minturn was in the city, and had chartered a small sloop yacht to run down to your island and then carry off Theone. Payne further stated that he had been made commander of the sloop, and that he had a crew of four men, and in two days Minturn was to start. Obtaining from the sailor the address of Minturn, I sought him out, accused him to his face of his treachery and scoundrelism, and punished him with a blow."

"He challenged me to fight him, I accepted, and was just going to seek a friend to act as my second when I met you, and therefore place the matter in your hands."

Milo listened patiently to Leo, and his face grew dark with rage when he heard of the insult offered to Theone, and he at once insisted upon himself being the one to resent it; but to this Leo would not listen, and it was agreed finally that Milo should seek Minturn and have the affair arranged as quickly as possible.

Oregon Minturn sat in his luxurious rooms in the St. Charles, and was thinking of his revenge upon the Menkens, for Lotta had treated with scorn his offer of his hand, for all of his past life had been told to her. Since that offer, which had been made immediately upon their return to New York, Oregon Minturn had not been heard from, and none knew where he was, until the seaman met Leo and informed him of

the bold plan of the dissipated and reckless young man.

Thus was Minturn thinking about the duel he was to fight on the morrow, and how easy it would be for him to kill Leo, and thereby revenge himself upon the family, and then go to the island and take Theone as his prize.

A tap came upon the door, and to his call to enter, Milo Duncan stood before him.

Minturn's eye quailed before the steady look of the man he had wronged, and his hand sought the table drawer where he kept his pistol.

Seeing the act, Milo said, quickly:

"I have not come to murder you, sir, but to act in a matter for a friend, Mr. Leo Menken," and then Minturn having referred him to his second, Milo sought that personage and the meeting was arranged for the following morning at sunrise, on the old battle-field below the city.

Punctual to the minute, Milo and Leo reached the field, and soon after Minturn, his second and surgeon drove up and dismounted from their carriage.

The spot chosen for the "deed of honor" was appropriate in every respect, for it was in a small copse of woods just on the bank of the Mississippi, and the river and a broad carriage highway afforded means of flight to the survivor, should he desire to leave the country to avoid pursuit.

Leaving their carriage, Minturn and his party advanced and calmly saluted Leo and Milo, and then the two seconds commenced preliminaries.

The presence, so unexpected to Minturn, of Milo in New Orleans, had evidently flurried the New Yorker, for his manner was not as indifferent as on the day before, for then he had anticipated an easy victory, Leo being quite near-sighted and therefore not a very good shot.

The weapons, long, single-barreled dueling pistols, were taken from their case, and then the second of Minturn and Milo tossed up for position, and the former won it, and also did he win the word to fire.

Shaking hands with Leo, Milo said a few words to him in a low tone, placed the pistol in his hand and then gave him a pair of eye-glasses, saying:

"Take these, Mr. Menken. Minturn has good eyesight and these place you more on an equality."

Leo put the glasses to his eyes, and, seeing the act, Minturn turned pale and addressed his second, who instantly objected to the proceeding.

"Then we will use swords, sir," answered Milo.

But this was also objected to, as Leo was known to be a good swordsman; so the pistols were retained, the principals took their stand, and Ward Marvel gave in distinct tones the word.

Both men appeared cool, Leo's face being flushed and Minturn's very pale, yet no outward emotion portrayed the deep feeling in their bosoms, as they aimed and fired simultaneously with the word "fire."

A wild look came into Minturn's face, an expression of baffled rage, fear of death and agony, and with a quick step, he advanced toward Leo, who calmly awaited his approach, although it was threatening; but the shot had found its mark, and, after making half a dozen steps, Oregon Minturn sunk upon the earth a dead man.

"Are you injured, sir?" asked Milo Duncan, stepping forward and grasping Leo's hand.

"Slightly; a mere flesh wound in the arm," and, rolling up his shirt-sleeve, a wound was discovered in the arm, the ball from Minturn's pistol having passed through it.

Seeing that his principal was dead, and that no service could be rendered him, the second of Minturn, Ward Marvel, and the surgeon both aided in dressing Leo's wound, which was not very severe, and then the body of the dead man was placed in the carriage, while Leo and Milo went to the river-bank and waved their hats three times to a small tug that had been lying out in the stream, the crew quietly watching the duel.

The tug came rapidly to the shore, and springing upon it, the young men gave orders to the captain to put on all steam and start down the river, for the little steamer had been chartered for the purpose by Leo, to convey him to the yacht should he be the survivor of the duel.

Toward evening the tug came in sight of the yacht, which Captain Menken had christened the "Surf Angel" in honor of Theone, and dismissing the steamer, the little vessel stood ruddily away from the coast, Milo naturally taking his place at the helm, after the warm greeting extended to him by Captain Menken and Lotta was over.

Leo's father and sister were much distressed to learn the cause of the wound the son and brother had received, and to hear how fatally the duel had terminated, but, knowing the greatest regret must be felt by the man whose hand had sent a fellow-being uncalled before his Maker, they put on a cheerful manner, and the affair was no more talked of.

On sped the Surf Angel, and the hearts of those on board lightened as the high cliffs of the little island came in view, and the noble vessel rapidly approached them, and under the skillful hand of Milo, an hour after, anchored in the harbor, where, standing upon the beach, waiting to offer them a cordial greeting, stood Ricardo and Theone, for with her glass the Surf Angel had recognized Milo at the helm as the yacht entered the channel, and hastening to tell Ricardo of their approach, they had hurried down to greet them.

CHAPTER X. THE HERMIT WRECKER'S STORY.

Assembled in front of the cabin, chatting over the past, and thinking of what the future might bring forth to each and all of them, was the party that had arrived that morning in the "Surf Angel" and Theone; but Ricardo was missing, for, after having welcomed Captain Menken and his daughter and son again to the island, he had affectionately greeted Milo, and then walked off by himself, leaving Theone to do the honors of the cabin.

The day had passed, and the evening meal was over, but old Ricardo still remained absent, and, at length, Milo became anxious about him, and set out in search of him.

First he went up to the cliff, and not seeing Ricardo there, he turned into a path leading into the woods, and, after ten minutes' walk, came to a small opening in the trees, and where a little white fence could be seen glimmering in the soft moonlight.

Approaching the small inclosure, Milo started forward with hasty steps as he dis-

covered, lying prone upon the ground, with his head resting upon his wife's grave, the form of Ricardo.

"Father, speak to me; are you ill?" asked the young man, earnestly, but no answer came to his question, and, with a sinking heart, he placed his hand upon the pulse.

"No, it beats; thank God he is not dead," he said, fervently, and a moan came from Ricardo.

Raising the form of the Wrecker in his strong arms, Milo carried him toward the cabin, and there, by the aid of Theone, he was made comfortable, and after having a stimulant forced into his mouth, the Hermit Wrecker opened his eyes and glanced at the anxious faces around him.

"Father, are you better? Tell me you are better," pleaded Theone, as she kissed the cold forehead of Ricardo.

"I have been a father to you and Milo; have I not, my children?" faintly asked the old man.

"Indeed you have, and will yet live many years to be happy with us," said Milo, while Theone leaned her head forward and wept.

"No, my sands of life are running out, and I shall never see another sunrise; my old blood is chill with death's icy touch, and ere long I shall leave you."

"Raise me up, Milo, then, so that I can look out upon the moonlit ocean, for it softens the bitterness of the story I must tell you."

"Come around me all of you, while I unfold a page of my life's history."

Reclining in a large easy-chair, the Wrecker turned his face toward the open door, and placed his hand gently upon the curls of Theone, who was seated upon the floor, with her head upon the old man's knee.

Holding his hand and standing by his side was Milo, while gathered around were Captain Menken, Lotta and Leo.

After a short silence, Ricardo asked for some brandy, and, as it seemed to give him strength, he commenced in a trembling voice to speak:

"My children, I must tell you of myself, but first let me say that you and I are in no way related, neither have you, Milo and Theone, kindred blood in your veins."

"Long years ago, when I was seventeen years of age, I had a happy home and loving parents, and, upon the banks of the Kennebec, in far-off Maine, I lived in peace and contentment; but a shadow fell upon our household; my brother stole from me the woman I loved, and I became a wild, dissipated boy, and on one night—how well I remember it—I raised my hand in anger and struck one of my comrades who insulted me."

"The blow proved fatal, and I fled, a murderer, and sought in foreign lands to forget I had the brand of Cain upon me."

"In New Orleans I became acquainted one night with a handsome, dashing fellow, and accepted an offer he made me to go to sea with him. I went, and upon going on board his vessel found that he was the pirate Luffite."

"Why need I dwell upon this? I followed his fortunes, and when he was pardoned for his gallant services in the battle of New Orleans, I left him and came here with my wife, for I heard from home, and my mother had died of a broken heart when they told her her boy was a pirate, and my father lived but a few months after."

"My wife accompanied me here, but she died before you came upon the island."

The Wrecker ceased speaking for a while, and gazed fondly upon the one who had not once raised her head from his knee, though now and then a shudder crept over her frame.

Milo still held the pirate's hand, and his face wore a look of commiseration and sorrow, but no sign that he hated the man for his past life.

Captain Menken and his children were quiet, but deeply interested listeners, and no word or sound broke the silence after Ricardo ceased speaking.

"More brandy; I feel faint," and as he drank it, he again resumed:

"About eleven years ago there was a fearful storm along this coast, and a large vessel bound from New Orleans to England was wrecked, and all on board, with two exceptions, were lost."

"Those two exceptions were you, my children—"

"I remember all now, father: it seemed like a dream to me before," said Milo.

"Yes, you and Theone were all that were saved. I brought you here and have raised you as my own children."

"You know, with letters and other things pertaining to the vessel you will find in that large trunk of mine, and from them you can learn all particulars regarding your families."

"I have sinned against you, my children, as I have against many others in my lifetime; but when I learned to love you, and you cheered my old years, I could not give you up. Now I ask that you forgive me, and to Captain Menken's care I leave you both, and I assure you I leave you rich, for in my trunk you will find money which I have made from vessels wrecked here, and I swear to you that not one dollar of it was gained by piracy. I am tired now, let me sleep," and closing his eyes, the Hermit Wrecker sunk quietly to rest, and without a moan, away the spirit took its flight, to answer before the judgment-seat of God for the wicked deeds done in the body.

A silence fell upon all, and they felt that they were in the presence of the dead.

Milo and Theone grieved deeply for Ricardo's death, for no matter what his crime-stained life was before the eyes of the world, to them he had ever been as a kind and gentle father.

The following morning, a coffin was made, and the body of Ricardo was lowered to the earth beside his wife, Captain Menken reading in an impressive voice parts of the funeral service, while all, including the crew of the Surf Angel, stood around the lowly grave with uncovered heads and sad faces.

CHAPTER XI. REUNITED.

Two days after the death of Ricardo, the Surf Angel stood out of the little harbor upon her northern-bound cruise, carrying with her, besides the owner and his party, Milo and Theone.

Upon her arrival at New York, search was at once made for the families of Milo and Theone, and from the papers left by Ricardo, they were easily found, and warmly welcomed into their circle those whom they had so long believed dead.

Milo's father had died some years before, and left his immense property to his daughter, who gladly shared it with her new-

found brother, so that the young man found himself wealthy and the head of one of the first families of the land.

Mr. Vane, Theone's father, was still living, and with pride and affection greeted his beautiful daughter, whom he had so long mourned as dead, and around the hearthstone of the Menken Manor, whither all had assembled to meet the young islanders, it was a happy gathering, and the days passed in enjoyment—for a round of gaiety followed their *entree* into fashionable life, and no shadows arose to dim the bright horizon of their joy, or cast in gloom the golden anticipations of the future.

CHAPTER XII. CONCLUSION.

A YEAR after the incidents related in the last chapter, a large number of guests assembled at Menken Manor, upon the Hudson, to witness the marriage of Theone Vane, formerly the "Surf Angel," to Leo Menken, and of Milo Duncan to Lotta Menken.

It was a grand affair, and after the ceremony, the party joined them as they went from the house down to the banks of the river.

Lying a short distance from the shore was the beautiful yacht, "Surf Angel," and her crew were at their posts in readiness to depart at a moment's notice.

Soon good-byes were exchanged between the two young couples, just married, and their friends, and getting into the little boat, they were rowed aboard the yacht, which a moment after spread her white sails and glided rapidly down the river, past New York, into the open sea, and then turned her graceful prow southward on her voyage to the island home, where Theone and Milo had passed their childhood's days.

This was their wedding tour, and with pleasure all four looked forward to again seeing the island they had learned to love so well.

Thus, kind reader, is my task finished, and sincerely do I hope you are all as happy as all my heroes and heroines in their lovely homes, where love and contentment ever abide, and sorrow is unknown.

THE END.

"Rogers' Slide."

BY MARK WILTON.

DURING the French-Indian war the "Rangers" were by far the ablest soldiers who served on the English side. The Rangers were made up of the hardy settlers, who, experienced in the ways of the wily red men, were able to successfully oppose them; while the British soldiers, used only to regular warfare, were almost invariably led into an ambush and slaughtered by the merciless savages, whose ways the Frenchmen were not long in learning.

Among the bravest and most noted of the Ranger leaders was Robert Rogers, who ultimately rose to the rank of major. This chief was subject to the orders of the British commanders and was sent on innumerable desultory expeditions against the French; sometimes to gain information of the plans and position of the enemy, at others merely to destroy property. In these the Rangers generally encountered a superior force, but still managed to hold their own or even to worst their opponents.

One of these expeditions we will now describe; and history will bear me out in the statement that it is strictly authentic.

In the spring of 1758 Rogers was ordered on a scout to the vicinity of Ticonderoga. It was at first given out that he was to have four hundred men, but when the time came only one hundred and eighty officers included, were furnished. The conduct of Colonel Haviland in ordering so small a force against the large one which was sure to confront them was to say the least decidedly reckless.

Rogers states that he entered upon this service with considerable uneasiness. Yet he obeyed promptly if not cheerfully.

About noon on the fourth day they arrived in the vicinity of the enemy's camp, and halted until three o'clock on a mountain which overlooked the advanced guard of the foe. At three o'clock p. m. the Rangers advanced in two divisions, one being led by Rogers and the other by Captain Bulkley. The snow was four feet deep, rendering the going very bad even for snowshoes. To the right of the body was a steep mountain, while on the left a small brook worked its way.

After advancing for a mile or more, a body of Indians were seen approaching, and as it was composed of only a hundred warriors, the men prepared to give battle. Securing an advantageous position, they awaited the approach of the enemy, half of whom were killed at the first fire. The remainder fled, being pursued by the triumphant Rangers, whose exultation was short, for encountering a large body of Canadians and Indians, they were driven back to their first position with great loss.

Twice the assailants attacked, but were as many times repulsed, and finding assaults useless, they began a regular battle, but slowly pressing forward, the combatants were so near together as to often be intermixed. The Rangers fought like heroes; but what could they do against a foe six times their own number?

When over two-thirds of their number had fallen, the surviving Rangers broke and fled, every man looking out for himself. Rogers, after striking down three savages who opposed him, found himself on the top of a sloping cliff a hundred feet in height. Dropping his rifle down, he swung himself over the brink, and clinging to bush and shrub, reached the bottom in safety.

During the retreat many of the wearied men were taken by the pursuing savages; but Rogers, with the remaining handful, at length reached Fort Edward. The Rangers' loss in killed and wounded was reported as one hundred and twenty-five; that of the Indians, three hundred. The precipice down which the Ranger leader escaped is still pointed out to the tourist as "Rogers' Slide."

THE PEARL OF PEARLS;

OR,
SUNSHINE AND CLOUDS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

A tale of Heart and Home, of romantic interest and great dramatic power, will be commenced in next week's SATURDAY JOURNAL.

Saturday Journal

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That man proposes but God disposes is verified. The Pearl is not a gem to tarnish, but one to be won and worn—as Pearl is!

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Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—Among the musical specialties should be mentioned Church's Musical Visitor, published monthly, in Cincinnati, by John Church & Co. It gives not only considerable excellent music, in each issue, but is a magazine as well—replete with matter of interest to those interested in music and musicians. Such publications greatly advance our public taste, and we could wish to see one or more of them in each household.

Our "Fat Contributor," (A. M. Griswold), not satisfied with the glory won on paper and platform, has resolved to try his hand on a weekly of his own, to be published in the "Queen City." It is one thing to say or write funny things, and another to print them, as "Gris" will discover. Prayers will be neither blessings in disguise nor as edifying as marrying an heiress. If "Fat" don't come out Lean, in one year's time, we will vote for President of the S. O. L. We, of course, wish him all kinds of good luck. May his "Saturday Night" never go into eclipse!

The Binghamton Republican thinks Captain Mayne Reid is our great card. We are, of course, proud of his work for us, but we have other contributors whose popular value is not one whit less than that of the great border romance writer. It is our happy privilege to say that no paper published in America has more elements of strength, interest and home value than now attach to the SATURDAY JOURNAL, and no paper more truly represents the rising literary talent of the country.

Recent news from Africa informs us of the fact that Dr. Livingstone is yet alive and well, and that, encouraged by his numerous geographical discoveries, he is bound to remain in the interior until he solves the riddle of the Nile, as well as to map the leading features of Equatorial Africa. The pluck and tenacity of the veteran explorer are quite as wonderful as his adventures and discoveries. What a story will he have to tell when he returns home, if he is so fortunate as to escape the thousand dangers which beset his path! The record of his last six years of research and adventure around Lake Tanganyika and the country to the north of it will read like an Arabian Nights' Entertainment. May the dear, brave old man live to tell his story, and to enjoy the honors which the whole civilized world is eager to bestow upon him!

The Paradise of Fruits.—It is undoubtedly true that California is the finest fruit region in the world. There, gathered in one area of three hundred miles long by eighty wide, are the combined fruits of three zones, as for instance:

"We have," says a California paper, "2,550,000 trees of the apple kind (including pears and quinces), 570,000 of the peach kind (including apricots and nectarines), 211,000 prunes and plums, 47,000 orange and lemon, 45,000 fig, 80,000 almond and walnut, and 100,000 cherry, 20,000 olive trees and 20,000 grape vines. The pomegranate, nopal and citron thrive, but are not numerous enough to deserve counting; the banana, plantain, guava, chirimoya, cocon, palm and pineapple are growing, but their profitable or extensive cultivation in the open air is yet doubtful. Tea, coffee and African sugar can be grown. Many delicate tropical and semi-tropical ornamental trees and shrubs adorn our gardens. The geraniums, fuchsias and finer varieties of the rose, the numerous Australian acacias and Eucalypti with their graceful foliage, the heliotrope, the India rubber plant, the forsythia, magnolia, camellia, and passion flower live through our winters in the open air."

Well may the State be denominated the Paradise of fruits! What other equal area on the globe can boast of such a fruitage? It was indeed a wise policy which made it a necessity to absorb that spot of land into the American Union!

A River of Liquid Fire!—We are told by an official statement from the Internal Revenue Department that the number of distilleries at work in this country is two hundred and fifteen, and that their daily capacity is two hundred and seventy thousand six hundred and eighty-two gallons. Reckoning the whole nation's population in round numbers at five millions, this would be over a

third of a pint of spirits a day for each male adult in the United States. This is nearly all whisky, for the proportion of other spirits distilled is small, comparatively. Admitting that the women and male youngsters under age drink some, there are as an offset to these a vast number of men who never drink spirits. Nor is the amount exported to other countries considerable. At the rate of production as stated above, one million seven hundred and forty-one thousand four hundred and fifty-six pints a day, we may calculate a half-pint daily on an average for every moderate drinker and toper. There is, no doubt, a great deal manufactured in small quantities and secretly, in a domestic way, in addition to this vast production of the taxpaying distilleries.

From this we can form some correct idea of the dreadful work which the Whisky Fiend is doing in America. The prevalence of drunkenness is indeed alarming. If, instead of seventy cents per gallon, the Government tax was seven dollars, it would be a blessing, providing the law was enforced! Oh, the curse of dram-drinking! Who can measure the high and the depth of the woe it entails! When will the law and public opinion unite in suppressing the evil?

MAKE FARMING PLEASANT.

There is a good deal of admirable advice in the papers to our country lads, headed "Don't Quit the Farm." The men and women who write those essays are to be praised, and I could cordially grasp their hands and tell them to continue in their good work.

You wonder why boys are so eager to leave the farm and rush into the whirlpools of the great cities; you can not conceive how they can leave the country's quiet for the city's glare, peace for racket, and purity of air for the stifled streets of the metropolis.

Will you allow me to tell you why? Farming is made too laborious. The boys have to work very hard, and if they need rest or relaxation, the farmer says, "When I was a boy, I had to work so; why should not you?" Does this inspire the youth with ambition, and doesn't he think that life was not made for all work, work, work? When his young friends come from the cities, dressed in their fine clothes, he imagines they are obtained without trouble, and the dull, hard farm life then becomes loathsome to him.

I was acquainted with a young fellow—and a good lad he was, too—who was apprenticed to a crusty old fellow, who worked the boy until he became tired out. My young friend was fond of reading, but his employer couldn't see any use of his wasting his time in that manner. Pitying his condition, I used to send him papers. At this, his employer complained, and at the lad's own request, I desisted. Then I used to hide them in the hollow of an old tree, but as that was found out, I invited the boy to come and read in the evening at my house. Would you believe it?—the man for whom he worked followed him to my home one evening, and made a good deal of trouble over it.

The young men formed a literary association in the place, of which Edwin was a member. The man, with his whole family, had so much to say against it, that the boy, for sake of peace, left it. I am telling you no myth. I am showing you what drives the lads to the cities, and am talking to those who have the young under their care.

Make farming pleasant! Don't grudge your boys a few hours' rest; don't scold them because they want amusement; if you do, you will find that they look upon your work with disgust, and upon you as a tyrant. Enter into the pleasures of your boys with an eagerness, as though you considered them to be human beings, and not mere machines, out of whom you are to get so much work. Youth loves pleasure, loves sympathy, and loves to know what he accomplishes gives satisfaction. But if you take no interest in what he does and keep him in with too tight a rein, he'll soon free himself from your restraint and rush to the large cities, where he thinks all is liberty and freedom. And when he is away from home, do you know where he passes his time and who his associates are? If you obey the Golden Rule and treat your boys as you would wish to be treated yourselves, you'd find the lads too well contented ever to leave home. Shall we live to see the day when we can ask the country lad, "Why do you not try your fortune in the city?" and have for an answer, "My home is too happy a one to leave."

I believe in work, yet not all work, and it pains me to see how much more some men value the muscles of their children than they do their brains and heart, and who look upon them for their money rather than their mental or moral value.

EVE LAWLESS.

MODEL YOUNG LADYISM.

There is a transition age when girls are sweet, gushing creatures, with all the fresh innocence of childhood mingling delightfully with the self-imposed dignity of approaching womanhood. When the cropped locks are left to grow long, and the gay ribbons which bind them back are no lighter than veils of future life. When the tucked skirts and pantalettes are supplanted by a demi-train, and only a "finishing term" remains of restricted yet happy school existence. When the tender heart is worn upon the sleeve with such open, blushing acknowledgment, prepared to surrender unconditionally to the first silly daw of a young jackanapes who chooses to peck at it.

Charming, foolish little creatures, with no more idea of the weals and woes of life than they have gathered from the adventures and disasters which befell Paulina Maude in her fictitious path through a hundred and twenty-five chapters before her happy finale was reached. It always reached, you know, and the expanding but-terflies of real life never go beyond the blissful union of "two hearts which beat as one," to speculate as to the probability of Marmaduke Fitz George looking glum over scorched ham and smoked tea, or Paulina Maude putting for the new silk her lord and master refuses to furnish funds to procure. At last still—lying herself at home, and growing thin and sorrow, while a cross baby is teething, because the splendid prospects which spread before the young couple in that final chapter lost their pristine tints when subjected to the tests of actual experience, and the constant unromantic exaction of bread and butter, for two.

The dainty girl's tastes never plunge be-

neath the service to arrive at these prosaic facts. They would knock all the pins from under those *chateaus d'Espagne* whose building occupies so many of youth's fleeting hours.

A season or two is quite sufficient to dispel the rosy, romantic mists, and Model Young Ladyism buds and blossoms outright.

No more girlish gushes of intense though short-lived feeling; no more tears over Paulina Maude's distresses, to be supplemented by generous slices of bread and butter or relieved by tart and currant jam; no more heroizing handsome shop-boys in bob-tailed coats who win favor and commit petty larceny by filching peppermints from the show-case for the comfit-loving fair one.

Now, bronze boots with metallic heels, dainty dresses and sweet little hats, supplant the early dreams of lords and castles, and lovers' adventures. Old Bullion and young Luckymann share equally and alternately the light of her smiles. The one will give her unlimited credit in consideration, the other is lavish with chain bracelets and costly knock-knocks.

Happy young belle! She has no need to emulate her grandmother by darning stockings after candlelight; there may be some of her sex reduced to such extremity—she has heard instances cited, indeed, but such people are as far removed from her sphere as though they inhabited other worlds.

There is one unvarying conventional example which she rebels against at first, but ends by going to the fastest extent. It is not to be impulsive, to possess exuberant spirits, or give vent to free expressions; consequently, all that is natural is crushed down, and an equable surface remains. It is gentle to be excessively courteous—one gains popularity by not snubbing one's dressmaker—so, there's a gentle tone and an unchanged look for all.

It is to gain the pinnacle of awarded distinction to become—

"Faintly and edily perfect, splendidly dull." Are hearts—warm, generous, faulty hearts—crushed into nonentities—do they slowly congeal in the perfecting process, or do they lie quivering and aching sometimes under the shackles which gentle breeding imposes?

Has Model Young Ladyism any rebellious promptings, or desires to burst the bonds and beat a new track from that which imposes restraint, silence, upon subjects most vital to welfare and happiness? Is it content to remain an automaton to all apparent purposes—pulseless, changeless, feelingless?

Advocates of Woman's Rights have built up their standard from unmanageable offshoots of the general class, but Model Young Ladyism holds aloof, and unmoved, sweeps on its accustomed way.

There's a goal, of course—there's an end to most things, I believe.

Model Young Ladyism generally ends in white satin and point, a brown velvet front, a plectronic bank-book, and a husband slipped somewhere among the accessories.

Sometimes it branches off into isms or callings, or goes down with a crash through financial panics.

What gradually develops from the first, or springs from the ruins of the last, I wonder?

PROFANITY.

CAN any one show that a person does any good to himself or to others by swearing? It is surely not a gentlemanly practice, and doubtless a person is ashamed of himself, for you scarcely ever know a man to swear in the presence of ladies.

And yet what a nation of swearers this is! The horse-car driver swears at his horses if they lag; the men awaiting in the car swears, the children of the streets swear as the car rumbles by.

Is swearing dignified? Is it nobles to thus take the Lord's name in vain? Do you enjoy healthier days or quieter nights for the oaths you use? Swearing is degrading, sinful, and not only hurtful to oneself but also to those about you. If a parent swears, he must not think it strange if his children do the same thing. What ever a father does the child looks upon as right, and at once commences to imitate the example set him.

A man, noted for his use of oaths, one day, on coming home, found his bright-eyed, curly-headed boy playing with his wooden horse, swearing away like a trooper, using words which, thank Heaven, he did not understand.

"How is this, Mary?" asked the man, in astonishment, of his wife. "Who taught this boy to swear?"

"He has no doubt heard you," was the answer, "and he thinks whatever papa says and does is right."

Do you believe that man ever swore again in the presence of his child? Surely he could not, and he found, if he could refrain from using his oaths at home, he could certainly do so abroad. The consequence was that he gave up the habit entirely. Why can not others do the same? The English language certainly contains words enough for use and requisite for all occasions without having to condescend to so miserable a substitute as this swearing. If the oath-takers knew how disagreeable their words sounded to others, their humanity would not let them hurt our ears with their swearing. If this sounds so terrible to us, how must it sound to Him whose name is so blasphemously used.

Did the swearers think of this, their oaths would be changed for words of love, and the name of the Maker would be used only for supplication and praise.

If we want the millennium to come, we must leave off swearing.

F. S. F.

Foolscap Papers.

My Visit to the Chinese Emperor.

WHILE in the Capitol of China lately I called to pay my respectfulness to the Emperor.

I had tried hard to purchase a Dime Book of Chinese Etiquette, but had failed to find one. I hadn't been there long enough to find out any thing about it, so I went, utterly ignorant of Celestial civility, but made up my mind to do just as Rome does, which in this case meant the Emperor.

I was very anxious to see him; and, indeed, when at the capital of any nation, I always make it a point to call and see the king, so that in the future when I have occasion to take my grandchildren on my knee I will find pleasure—besides spanking them—in telling of my receptions.

I rode to the palace on a wheelbarrow in great state and carried a fan, and was not a little downhearted because I didn't know the rules of the court.

The Emperor rose from his throne as I entered, placed his thumb on the end of his nose and wiggled his fingers at me. Not to be outdone by the chief of barbarians I put my thumb to my nose and wiggled my fingers at him. Then he shook his fist at me; of course I was obliged to shake my fist at him. Then he rolled his eyes around in their sockets and spat at me. To be civil, I also rolled my eyes around in their sockets and spat at him. I thought these were peculiar politenesses, but if there is one thing more or less than another that I like to be, it is to be decorous.

Then he said "Whang bang" and kicked me, pointing to the door; being compelled to treat him with all due respect, I said "Whang bang," and kicked him, and pointed to the door also.

Then he grabbed me by the coat-collar and gave me the most conventional shake I ever had, except some not at all conventional which my worthy school-teacher gave me because I studied too hard, and didn't whisper any.

I thought Chinese greetings were exceedingly primitive, and dearly wanted a United States Minister as an interpreter, or more properly an *interpreter*, for I thought there was a good deal of roughness in the Emperor's friendship, and I didn't know what he might do if he got affectionate; but, of course, I took him by the collar and shook him with equal fervency—so much so that both his slippers flew off, one going through a plate glass window and the other up against the ceiling.

He then drew his sword, but as I was without one, I jerked out of my coat-pockets two big corned Norway rats of the Greeley importation, which I had brought from Chappaqua expressly to present to him.

All at once his whole manner changed; he threw his arms around my neck and pressed a kiss on my celestial cheek—or a celestial kiss on my cheek.

He was delighted; they were the noblest rats he had ever seen. He said I must stay and take supper with him. He asked me if Mr. Greeley did rear them. I replied that he did, and that he had an endless variety of them; they were all of the improved stock. Mr. Greeley considered the Durham rat to be easiest raised, taking less corn. The Southdown and the Berkshire he also thought well of.

We had a long talk, and he got so familiar that he borrowed my handkerchief several times to blow his eyes, and we had tea together. He was surprised to learn that some of the people of the United States were human beings, and appeared to be perfectly shocked at the size of the feet of American ladies—I confess I have been frequently shocked myself at some of them.

He spoke of some of his people who were working at the shoe business in Massachusetts for the enormous sum of thirteen cents a day; said he knew the natives objected to them, and intimated that he intended to send enough of them over here to protect themselves—a small matter of a couple of hundred millions.

He told me slyly that there were no weeds in his whole realm, not even widows' weeds, as he compelled all widows to marry again—they had all been made up into tea to ship to America; said the great wall was built by a very wise Emperor to protect the people from the cold winter blasts of the north; said he thought a great deal of the philosophy of Confucius—I detected a good deal that was *confusion* in his philosophy.

I presented him with a jew's-harp and taught him how to play on it, which delighted him vastly; showed him how to tie a bow-knot in a shoe-string, and to match heads or tails with coppers in a way by which he would seldom lose.

He said I'd be a fine-looking man if I would wear my hair in a queue and let my eyes grow up and downwardly. He sketched my portrait himself, in which he put the Celestial touch to the eyes. The picture resembled me so much that you couldn't have told it from two holes in the wall.

I reviewed his bodyguard. In marching they looked like a crowd of fellows going a-hunting. In filing they had to turn round a tree, and when they were ordered to fire a volley, each threw his gun on the ground and jumped behind trees while they pulled the triggers with strings.

I wasn't quite hungry enough to stay for supper, so we parted well pleased—at least I was pleased to get away, promising to send him a couple of pups.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Short Stories from History.

Origin of the Drama.—The first permanent theater, erected within the city of Rome was upon a scale of colossal magnificence. It was calculated to contain forty thousand spectators, and others were afterward raised of still more stupendous dimensions. They were at first open at the top, and awnings were used to guard against the sun and rain, nor were the audience accommodated with seats; but at a later period they were covered, and built with regular rows of stone benches, rising above each other, and divided according to the rank of those who were to occupy them. The lowest rows were appropriated to the senators and foreign ambassadors, the next fourteen to the knights, and the remainder to the public; and it appears that the foremost seats were covered with cushions, while those assigned to the lower classes were left bare. As all were equally admitted gratuitously, these distinctions gave very great offense to the people; and with the greater apparent reason, as they were not observed in the circus; but they were, notwithstanding, rigidly enforced, and inspectors were appointed at the theaters, who regulated the distribution of places according to the rank of the parties. The stage was constructed in much the same manner as at present, except that the orchestra was equally appropriated to dancing and music.

THE WINGED MESSENGER;

RISKING ALL FOR A HEART.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL.

will be given in succeeding numbers of the SATURDAY JOURNAL. This is a very charming society romance—good warm weather reading—in which a Garrison Dove plays a somewhat exciting and certainly very interesting part. As a love story, like all of Mrs. Crowell's productions, it is evidently from a hand that knows the woman heart wonderfully well.

Readers and Contributors.

To Correspondents and Artists.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. received for future columns. Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only when stamps accompany the enclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS." MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases your claims must be upon merit or fitness; secondly, upon excellence of MS. in typography; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit, we always prefer the shorter. Never write on both sides of a sheet. The Commercial Note the paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, bearing of each page as it is written, and carefully giving its folio or page number.—A rejection, by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. are available to us in well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters, except in special cases.

We can not use "Wanderings in America;" "Homeward Bound;" "The Mantle;" "Tom-Iceland's Clambake;" "Loneliness;" "Who Holds the Key?" "Shall We Be Missed?" "A Little Willie's Shoes;" "Pears;" "The Lost Ring;" "A Bay Storm;" "When Bright Tears Flow;" "A Graceless Scamp;" "The Notary's Bond;" "Green Box;" "A Jolly Boat."

Will find room for "Amy Livingston's Mistake;" "A Remonstrance;" "Model Young Ladyism;" "Unconquered Marriages;" "Claude Steele's Scheme;" "The Tragedy;" "The Bank Clerk;" "Zephyr's Theft."

M. G. W. Jim Gibbons was alive in 1860 when Capt. Adams was in command of the 1st Cavalry, and the S. W. border.

BREIN ADAMS. The author named is resting on his laurels at present, but we hope to see him at work again, some of these days.

C. V. C. We never published the story referred to, nor its sequel.—We do not care to see the verses.

W. E. When you copy a poem and send it to us original, you ought to be careful to copy correctly.

DELLA H. The article is a mere school composition. To ask pay for such is to ask pay for the leaves you can pick up in the gutter.

FRANK S. Oh, don't! Autograph hunters are a great man's terror.

ROYAL KEENE. Powdered borax, or charcoal and orris paste are both excellent dentifrices.

A. H. A lady is one who behaves like a lady. Education by no means makes a lady. Good manners and true gentility are not virtues acquired by purchase.

DOLLY VAHREN, No. 1. A brother.

DOLLY VAHREN, No. 2. Syracuse, your rosebushes with white old soap.

DOLLY VAHREN, No. 3. Newport is by no means a healthy place. It is simply cold. Every thing molds there, so damp is it.

DOLLY VAHREN, No. 4. The book business is a good one providing you understand it, and can obtain a proper position in a bookstore. We would greatly rejoice to see young ladies behind the book counter as saleswomen.

GREAT BOKE. Washington Whitehorn is not very arched. He has traveled some, and is, we suppose, on his travels now, or ought to be; a man who knows so much can not afford to be idle.

LIZZIE B. Buffalo. No young man should be held "responsible" for "attentions" unless he has formally avowed himself as a suitor and absorbs all your attention. Because he calls frequently and continually a sign of his regard for you, but nothing more, unless he avows himself as your lover. Young ladies make a serious mistake in construing attentions as "serious." Such a view of a gentleman's calls and gallantry is well calculated to drive them away.

MARCE P. To take writing ink out of paper, use solution of muriate of tin, two drachms; water, four drachms. Apply with a camel's hair brush, and after the writing has disappeared pass the paper through water and dry.

SERIAL. Alexander Dumas, the great French novelist, died in France, Dec. 18th, 1870. He was the son of General Dumas, a mulatto.

HAROLD. The beautiful column of Napoleon in the Place Vendôme, was leveled by the Communists on the 15th of May, 1871.

MUSE. William Cullen Bryant is still living, and it is to his gifted pen that we are indebted for the beautiful lines you ask for. See his "Pantheistic" poem.

So live that when thy anthers come to join The innumerable caravan, which flows To seek its mysterious home, where each shall find His chamber in the silent land of sleep. Then go to bed, like the queen slave at night, Scourged by his daughter's lash, and smothered By an unfaltering troop, approach thy grave, Like one that wrings his hands, and cries, About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

A MASTER OF ARTS. In your manuscript before me, there are many things that are new, and many things that are true; but, those things that are new are not new, and those things that are true are not true. Don't feel discouraged; try again.

FRITZ P. The French army evacuated Paris March 24, 1871.

S. A. M. King Victor Emmanuel entered Rome December 31st, 1871. He was enthusiastically received by the people, and the city was illuminated.

SCHOOLBOY. The art of pleasing is the very soul of every breeding. Avoid Greek and Latin quotations, for nothing is so wearisome as pedantry. They are only to be used when really necessary.

HARLEM. In writing for the press, use only one side of the paper. Review every word, to be sure that none is illegible. The better plan is to consist of author or practical printer. Do not load your essays with your effusions until you know how to write.

LEONORA. Yours is truly a hard case. State the case candidly to your mother, and don't commit yourself without her consent. Remember that your first duty is to your mother. If the gentleman is worthy of your love, he will coincide with your views.

JENNIE J. B. To make puff-paste the butter should be rubbed gently in. The proportions are: flour one and a half pounds; butter, a half pound; water, a half pint. Knead for fifteen minutes, then roll out thin, and rub in a little more butter.

JONATHAN. The quotation, "Young men think old men fools, and old men know young men to be so," was quoted by Canning, as a saying of one Dr. Metcalf.

OLLIE GREEN. You are both incorrect. The following are the verses you refer to, and were written by Thomas Moore:

Oh, ever thus, from childhood's hour, I've seen my fondest hopes decay; I never loved a love or flower, But 'twas the first to fade away.

I never nursed a dear darling, To glad me with his black eye, And when he came to know me well, And loved me, he was gone.

NELLIE RAYMOND. A pleasant perfume and preventive against moths may be made of the following ingredients: Take of sawdust, camphor, nutmeg, cloves and Terebinthina, of each one ounce. Add two ounces of oil rose, grind the whole to powder, and distribute in little bags among your clothing.

MRS. EUNICE C. L. has a naughty brother, who has "freed" her "nice, white, kitchen-floor," by letting a bottle of ink fall. Use strong muriatic acid or spirits of salts applied with a cloth; after wash well with water.

BLANCHE. It is essentially necessary that the cage of your bird should be thoroughly cleansed every day. Fine sand or gravel should be strewn on the bottom of the cage. Canaries must be kept in a warm room, though when the sun shines, the little prisoners will be refreshed by having the window open. Give plenty of fresh water daily both for the bath and drinking.

CARRIE C. Soap-suds should not be used in cleaning mirrors. Take a sponge dipped in clean cold water; wash the glass well and dry; then take a sponge in spirits of wine, rub over well and the "cloudy tinge" you complain of will disappear.

DOES A DANCE. Consult a dancing-master. The meaning of it is "Back to back."

S. R. The word slouch is pronounced as in slown, and signifies a mirth plough. When denoting the cast skin of a serpent it is pronounced snuff.

HORSEKEEPER writes: "I have almost worn my patience out trying to imitate the bright glossy appearance of new shirt-bosoms. Now, Mr. Editor, I have learned so many good things from the columns of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, that I am confident you can give me the necessary information. Won't you please

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

BY FRANK M. IBERIE.

I've been wondering all day long
What my subject should be for another song,
So with magical art I'll try to tell
Of true lovers' secrets guarded so well.
If I fail in my purpose I'll straightway go
Craving assistance from one I know.
This one important question I'll ask,
If lovers always in sunshine bask;
Or is it the tremulous moment they say
When a gent asks a lady to—name the day?

I know from novels we oftentimes learn
The course of true love has many a turn;
But the ocean of bliss is reached at last—
Greater the joy that the breakers are passed.
When life began, love had its birth,
Lighting and gladdening all our earth.
It reigned in our own dear parents' breast,
Crowning their lives with its golden crest.
Now, was it the tremulous moment they say
When father asked mother to name the day?

My muse has vanished, I must seek some aid
To solve this query that prying has made;
I will hit to one who I know is so true,
He will tell me, so I will tell you.
He said: "In order to tell you aright,
We must mimic the poem the fairy sprite,
Talk soft and low, so none may hear,
I—love—you—please sit closer, dear."
I trembled, I know, when I named the day.

Won in Spite of Herself.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"MAIZE CLIFFORD! I am positively ashamed of you! You, a daughter of Eben Clifford, to utter such bitter treason to all the acknowledged laws of politeness—and good sense!"

And the bronze-brown eyes of Juliette Clifford fairly snapped again as they shot their reproving glances on the gracefully bowed head opposite.

A merry little smile rippled over Maize Clifford's face at her sister's words; a smile that vanished even while its glory was brightest, for the girl remembered with a pang, the funeral that had crossed their threshold a month sooner.

"I do not think poor papa would agree with you, Julie, if he were alive. As it is, the fact that he was our dear, indulgent parent ought not to hinder us from striving to seek our own living in any honorable way that offers."

"Earn our living! Why will you persist in calling it by such homely terms? I declare, Maize, when I hear you talk so I feel tempted to believe you care nothing for my feelings."

And pretty Juliette sought refuge behind her black-bordered handkerchief.

"I do regard your feelings, Julie, *cherie*, and, if I will be any comfort to you, I will never use such plain language again. Now, dear, when are you going to enter upon your new duties at Hellington Park? Oh, how I wish I had a position as governess like yours!"

And the honest little sigh of regret that came from Maize's lips seemed to cheer Juliette's spirits wonderfully.

"Indeed you may wish it, Maize; particularly now, mind, this is a solemn secret—*particularly* as Mr. Hellington is one of the handsomest men I ever saw, and a widower besides. Oh, Maize, you don't know how ambitious I am."

But a deep flush was burning on Maize's cheeks—she was feeling shame for the sister of hers who was deliberately angling for the love of a stranger, whose motherless little ones were to be confided to her care.

"Juliette!" she began, half angrily, but Juliette's own soft voice had begun again: "If I only had a handsome iron-grenadine dress, you know, and mamma's jet jewelry, I would feel more assured. There's sure to be so much money at Hellington Park, and if I only succeed—"

And then, because Juliette's words offended Maize's proud spirit—proud, yet far humbler than Juliette's own, Maize slipped away where she might not be obliged to listen.

"A situation, eh? Well, Miss, you don't look much like hard work, that's a fact."

And the not unkindly eyes of the clerk in the intelligence-office were bent in respectful, wondering sort of admiration on Maize Clifford's pure, snow-drop face.

"Then there are no vacancies that will suit me?"

It was almost pitiful the sad weariness in her sweet tones; then the sudden lighting of her eyes as the clerk ran his finger down the long list of names.

"Let me see, let me see! Here's chambermaids, cooks, handmaiden—plenty of them wanted, but that's out of the question for you, you see," and the eyes searched again the pure, patient face.

"Yes, *you're* out of the question; now if there only was a lady's companion wanted, or a music-teacher, or a copyist, or something like that—oh, by the way, if there isn't that order that was left not fifteen minutes ago—just the thing!"

And Maize felt her heart beat delightedly at the look of kindness that crossed the clerk's face as he read from a card what was wanted:

"An intelligent lady, who writes a good hand, and is interested in literary pursuits, can find a position congenial to a refined taste by applying at No. — Gramercy Place, at once."

It was a rather singular advertisement, to be sure, but if she only might find it remunerative and respectable!

The clerk had hastily written the address, and handed it to her with an explanatory word.

"He's an author, you see—one of the most popular; too, and he wants somebody to—well, don't exactly know what authors do do, but I reckon it's to keep his papers all straight, and so on."

And little Maize smiled as she went thoughtfully away, at the thought of an author liking his papers kept "straight." She was "literary" enough to have divined that secret, at least!

A tall, grave-faced man, with deep thought mirrored in his dark-gray eyes; tenderest love in his perfect face, and stern will on his well-cut lips.

That was Maize Clifford's employer, Mr. Denton, the author, for whom she had worked three months; the lover, who was bending over her sweet, flushed face, and telling her how she had taught him the most beautiful lesson of his life, and asking, in the tender, demanding way so natural to him, that he might be her pupil forever in love's school.

And Maize listened, and wondered while she listened. Why had it all come to her, this glorious love of such a god? how did

she deserve it? what was there in her to win him?

So, in sweetest abasement she took to her gentle keeping the destiny of Howard Denton, and thanked God for the precious task that was to be her life-work.

The engagement was not to be long; the lower wanted to take his bride with him on a summer tour to the Falls, the Lakes and the Mountains; and so, almost at once, Maize wrote to Juliette, away out at Hellington Park, and told her all the joyous news.

She was somewhat uncertain, when she wrote it, what her haughty sister would say when she learned that "Eben Clifford's daughter" had demeaned herself by marrying a man who "worked" for his living, even if it was with his brain; and Maize, therefore, was not disappointed when the answer came, angrily denouncing her for "taking her goods to such a market," almost spitefully sketching pen portraits of an author's home, and an author's wife's destiny.

But Maize smiled to herself, and thought how little Juliette knew the sort of man Howard Denton was.

Somehow, Mr. Denton came to learn of the contents of the letter; she had grown very used to confiding in him, and almost before she knew it, he was laughing over it, and told her if it did not sound too conceited, he should certainly say Miss Juliette was jealous that Maize had beaten her in the race matrimonial.

Seriously, he advised her to go to Hellington Park for a visit; see Juliette personally, and invite her to the wedding for the 28th of June.

And, nothing loth, Maize took the boat one delicious late May afternoon for Hellington-on-the-Hudson. It seemed to Maize like some enchanted spot, led down from fairyland; and, as she roamed through the immense park, studded with miniature lakes, cascades, groves and lawns, where snowy statues gleamed beneath the glossy sheen of silver waves and greenest foliage; where fanciful summer houses and silvan retreats lifted their graceful towers from above vine-covered trellises, she admired with a strange wondering awe that aught on earth could be so perfect.

And then the house—the grand white marble mansion, to gain the doors of which she had to ascend dozens of marble, fawn-guarded steps; this fairy palace, that was a picture to look at, so perfect were its appointments, so magnificent all its garnishings.

"I can not censure you for worshipping it all," Juliette said, "but I tell you the solemn truth, when I say, beside Howard Denton's love, it all would not balance a feather's weight."

"You're a fool," answered Juliette, contemptuously. "As if any woman living would refuse all this splendor for the sake of love! But, Maize, when it goes with a man who is a god in himself, as Mr. Hellington is—"

And her brown eyes took in a proud, passionate light that revealed the secret of her soul.

"To be sure, I have not seen him," said Maize, "but I am not afraid of his comparing with Howard."

"He will be home to dinner—at five."

In her coveted "iron-grenadine and jet suite," Juliette was perfectly radiant when she arose from the crimson plush *let-a-tete* in the dining-room to meet Maize at the door; Maize, in a trailing pure white *erand*, with dainty lace collar and cuffs, and no jewels; only a tuberoso and a geranium at her fair white throat, as she came gracefully forward to bow to the gentleman who, half in the shadow of the curtains that swayed to and fro in the inner breeze, arose to acknowledge Juliette's introduction.

"This is my sister Maize, Mr. Hellington; you have heard me speak—"

A little scream from Maize; a merry, jocund laugh from the gentleman who sprang to her side.

"Howard!—Howard! I thought she said Mr. Hellington—why, Julie, this is Mr. Denton."

Howard Denton Hellington, who preferred to be known by his *nom de plume* till his novel was finished. Allow me to present my betrothed bride, Miss Juliette, and a sister's kiss of you, even if Maize's husband *did* have to work for his living."

Very quietly he there explained it to the sisters; one with starchy, awesome eyes and palpitating heart, as her lover wound his arm around her; the other listening with dumb agony, and the while spearing to death all the sweet hopes that had bloomed in her heart.

Now, Juliette Clifford is very proud of, and is quite given to quoting, on available occasions, "My sister, Mrs. Howard D. Hellington, of Hellington Park."

Lightning Jo:
The Terror of the Santa Fe Trail.

A TALE OF THE PRESENT DAY.

BY CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS.

AUTHOR OF "THE PRINCE OF THE PRAIRIE," "THE BOY TRAPPER," "OLD GRIZZLY," "THE BEAR-TAMER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SHUT IN.

The little party of horsemen had scarcely begun their passage through the hills, when it became evident that they were to encounter the storm of which Lightning Jo had spoken. The warm air became of chilly coldness, and blew in fitful gusts against their faces, the sky was rapidly overcast by dark, sweeping clouds, and the rumbling thunder approached nigher and nigher, rolling up from the horizon like the "chariot-wheels over the court of heaven," while the forked lightning darted in and out from the inky masses, like streams of blood. A few screeching birds went skurrying away in a cloud of dust, and the appearance of every thing left no doubt of the elemental tumult that was on the eve of breaking forth.

"We're going to catch it, you bet," remarked Jo, as he looked up at the marshaling of Nature's forces, clapping his hand to the top of his head, as if fearful that his cap would be whirled out of sight by the tornado-like gusts of wind, "but it would be worse out on the prairie than down here."

He had to shout to make himself heard,

although the lovers, Egbert and Lizzie, were riding close to him.

The former shouted back the return in the question:

"Can we not find shelter before the storm comes? We shall all be drenched to the skin, if we are exposed to the deluge for the space of five minutes."

"Certainly, we can find shelter, and that's just what I'm going for this minute. We'll make it afore the deluge comes. If we'd been on the prairie we'd had to hold our hair on; and we'd have got such a basting that it would have taken a lifetime to get over."

"Couldn't we have found shelter in the wagons?" yelled Egbert.

Jo's face could be seen to expand in a grin, as he made answer in the same vociferous tone:

"Shelter in the wagons? I've seen that tried afore—when the covering was slathered to ribbons in the wink of an eye, and the wagons went rolling over and over like a log, going down the side of a mountain till they went out of sight, and when we rid our horses 'long over that same route, we made our camp-fires with bits of wagon for the next fifty miles. I reckon you haven't had a storm 'sin' you left St. Louey?"

"Certainly nothing like that," was the answer of Rodman, who thought the scout was drawing things with rather a "long bow." "We had several storms, such as struck us all as being very severe."

"S'pose you thought so; but they were the gentlest of zephyrs alongside of some that I've butted ag'in." I come over the plains with a party in '48, when I was purty young, and took my first degree in prairie storms then. We were 'bout a hundred miles out of St. Louey, when we butted ag'in a dead head-wind, that got so strong that we se'd purty soon we shouldn't be able to stand. When I se'd how things was going, and that my hoss was a-slipping backward, I jumped off my hoss, and laid down flat on my face and held onto the ground; but it wa'n't no use. I se'd my animal going end over end over the plain, looking like a dough-nut turning summer-sets, and, finding I was blowing loose, I crawled into the wagon in the tallest kind of hurry."

"And there you were safe," remarked Egbert, knowing that something stunning was at hand.

"Yes, I rather think we was," he answered, ironically. "When I crawled into the ox-wagon, I found all the rest war there, and the old shebang was already going backward, and gaining every second like a steam-engine. You see the wind was dead ahead, and the cover of the wagon acted like a sail, and it wa'n't long afore we was a-going over the prairie at a rate that you never dreamed of. You can just bet things hummed. I looked out of the side of the coach, and se'd the wagon-wheels going round so fast that you couldn't see any thing but the hubs, and they had a misty sort of look, from buzzing round in such style. Some of the women got a little nervous, and said they preferred to ride at a little slower gait, and axed me, if it was all the same to me, if I wouldn't shut off a little steam. All I could do was to put on the brakes, and the minute I done that, I se'd a flash, and they was gone!—just like a pinch of powder—burned up by the friction."

"So I told the folks to compose themselves, as I reckoned we war in for it, and we'd all go to pieces together. Well, now, that shebang kept going faster and faster. I just tell you things buzzed for awhile. I looked out the tail of the wagon (we war going tail foremost) and se'd ourselves going right straight for Devil's Humps—which you know is two mountain peaks, some way like the shape of a mile apart. Thinking every thing was up, I just scooped down in the wagon and watched to see ourselves go. I s'pose you will think I'm exaggerating, when I tell you we went right up the first mountain-peak, which was half a mile high, as quick as a wink, but there the wagon struck a rock, turned summer-sets; but it was going so fast that it shot right across from one peak to another, and happening to light right side up, we kept straight on for St. Louey. That ere jump from one mount to another rather scared us, and some of the women complained of being jarred a little."

"Howsoever, we got straightened up after a bit, and then began to watch things. I knowed there was fun ahead, when I se'd a thundering big drove of cattle right in our path. They tried to get out of our way, but they couldn't, and we went right through them like a cannon-shot, and when I looked back I se'd a regular tunnel through the drove of buffers knocked to flinders. You see there was several purty good-sized streams in our way, and when we buzzed through them some of us got our clothes a little moist, but we had to let things go, and, to make a long story short, we never held in until we reached St. Louey, where we shot straight through the biggest hotel, and into an old lady's cellar afore we stopped."

"Of course we was a little shook up, but that was nothing to what we met next day—"

Lightning Jo suddenly paused, in the very middle of the sentence, and his companions saw his face blanch and his eyes flash, as though he had caught sight of some new and appalling danger.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TERROR OF THE PRAIRIE.

THERE WAS NO need of Lightning Jo telling what it was that so startled him, for following the direction of his own gaze, every eye saw it on the instant.

On the upper margin of the precipitous chasm or canon, through which they were making their way, at a point about a hundred feet above and directly over them, was the apparition which had so startled Captain Shields when in Dead Man's Gulch. The mustang was standing as motionless as then, and the same quadrupedal nondescript was perched upon its back, its black head turned a little to one side, while it was evidently gazing down upon them with a fixed, intense stare.

"The devil will be to pay now," growled Jo, just loud enough to be heard in the roaring wind; "but it's too late to put back, and we'll press ahead."

And resolutely compressing his lips, he drove his mustang to the head of the cavalcade and forced him into a gallop along the canon, the others, of course, following his example.

Neither Egbert nor Lizzie had made the least reference to this apparition, while in converse with the scout, for the reason that each knew he bore the reputation of being a practical man, and would only laugh and

tell them that it was a "spook," that their fright and sufferings caused to appear to their own minds—an explanation which both were inclined to accept up to this point.

But Jo had scarcely started ahead, when several large drops of rain pattering here and there in the gorge, warned them that the threatened deluge was at hand. The winding of the canon, at the point over which they were now hurrying, was such that there was comparatively little about them, although it moaned and sobbed over their heads like the desolate wailing of lost spirits.

"Hurry up, Jo!" yelled Egbert, from directly in the rear of the lovers, "or we shall be drenched!"

No need of shouting to the scout, who at that moment made a dash a little to one side, and then wheeling his steed squarely about, halted and motioned to the others to join him on the instant.

The shelter was reached.

The horse of the scout stood on the same level with the bottom of the canon; but, the rocky side of the latter, instead of sloping perpendicularly upward, inclined far out over their heads, so that the upper margin projected fully twenty feet further over than did the base, thus giving them the very protection for which they were so hastily seeking.

The party lost no time in arranging themselves beneath this roof, and in a few minutes the two wagons came lumbering up, the horses forced to a much more rapid gait than they had yet attempted.

They had barely time to reach the spot, when the bullet-like drops that had been pattering faster and faster, suddenly and prodigiously increased, and the storm broke forth.

The scene was fearfully sublime—and such as our pen scarcely dare attempt to depict. The rain came down in such blinding torrents that the top of the gorge was shut out from the view of the whites, and a dim, watery twilight gloom enveloped them all. The thunder, that had been somewhat diminishing for the last few minutes, now burst forth in rattling, tremendous discharges, as if heaven and earth were coming together—while the vivid, intense lightning seemed to be everywhere—rending rocks and trees, and playing along the canon in its arroyo flight, and setting the whole air aflame.

All stood aghast and hushed—no one daring to break the stillness, and scarcely moving during this war of the elements. It seemed as if it were blasphemy for man to seek to speak or interpose during the moments when nature herself was speaking in such trumpet-like tones.

But the storm was as short as it was "violent"; and as the booming thunder retreated, and gradually died away in sullen reverberations, the fall of rain slackened, and just as the afternoon was drawing to a close, the last drop fell.

The appearance of the mustang and its strange rider seemed to have produced a remarkable effect upon Lightning Jo, who had lost all his vivacity and humor, and was thoughtful and silent.

"Are we to remain here all night or go forward?" asked Egbert, walking to where Jo stood, leaning against the rocks, with arms folded and moodily brow.

"Go forward," he replied, almost savagely, as he raised himself. "What do we want to stay here for?"

"I see it is nearly dark, and Fort Adams is still a number of miles away. We shall not be able to reach there until far into the night. Why not encamp where we are and finish the journey leisurely in the morning? There seems to be no particular danger."

"I tell you there *is* danger," was the fierce roar of the scout; "did you see that thing on the mustang?"

"Yes; and I have seen it before."

"And so have I, and I can tell yer it means something. When that comes 'round, there's the worst kind of deviltry close on to its heels; you can bet on that!"

Then we are not yet through with the Indians, after believing we were perfectly clear of them."

"I didn't say that—but what I mean is that some devilry is brewing; we're right in the middle of these hills, and the best thing we can do is to get ahead while we can."

"Hush!" exclaimed Lizzie Manning, in an awed voice; "what is the meaning of that?"

CHAPTER XX.

A FEARFUL RIDE.

A DULL, increasing roar, like the moaning of the Indian Sea, when the cyclone is being born, struck the ears of the whites, all of whom paused in their conversation and listened, wondering what it meant.

The horses showed signs of restlessness and fear, but they were held sternly in check, while the riders bent all their faculties into that of hearing; and by a common instinct, every eye was turned toward Lightning Jo, as if inquiring of him an explanation of the strange sound.

What the scout thought can only be conjectured; but there was a scared look upon his face that gave all the most gloomy forebodings, and they awaited his words and actions with an intensity of anxiety that can scarcely be described.

The roar, which now drowned every other sound, was like that made by the approaching train, and it had that awful element of terror which comes over one when he feels that a peril is bearing swiftly down upon him from which there is no escape.

"Onto your horses, every one of you! Cut 'em loose from the wagons, and don't wait a minute!"

The voice of Lightning Jo rung out like a trumpet and was obeyed on the instant, while by another imperious command of his, the women and children were taken upon the backs of the animals in front of the hunters.

Quickly as all this was done, it was not a moment too soon. In reply to the questioning looks of his friends, the scout pointed out the ravine in the direction whence they had come.

At first sight, there seemed to be a mass of discolored snow spinning down the canon; but the next moment all knew that it was the foam and spray of water, rushing down upon them with the impetuosity of a Niagara.

"Hold fast!" called out Jo; "but there's no use of trying to fight it!"

Even while the words were in his mouth, the appalling torrent came down upon them, and then every horse, with its rider,

was carried as quick as a flash off his feet, and shot down the canon like a meteor.

Egbert Rodman, the moment he realized the nature of the danger, reached forward and caught the hand of Lizzie Manning, intending to place her upon the horse, in front of him, as many of the other scouts had done; but ere he could accomplish the transfer, the shock was upon them, and in the stunning, bewildering crash, he was only sensible of going forward with tremendous velocity, down the canon, among his friends, who were all impelled onward by the same resistless force, that made them, for the time, like bits of driftwood heaped in the vortex of the great maelstrom.

"Lizzie! where are you?" he called out, in his agony, groping blindly about him, in the tornado of mist, and driftwood, and water; "reach out your hand that I may save you!"

He heard something like an answering cry; but in the rush and whirl, he could not tell the direction nor the point whence it came; and had he known that only a half-dozen feet separated them, it was no move in his power to pass the chasm, than it was for him to turn and make headway against the *chute* that was carrying every thing before it with an inconceivable velocity.

It would be impossible to describe the appalling scene in the canon. Those who lived to tell of it, in after years, shuddered at its recollection and declared that its terror was greater than any through which they had ever passed. The little group who sat waiting and conversing upon their horses had scarcely been caught up and shot forward, when the gloom of the approaching night deepened to that of the most intense, inky blackness, so that no man, speaking literally, could have seen his hand before his face.

It would have made no difference had it been high noon, so far as the question of helping themselves was concerned, although it might have lessened in some degree that shuddering, shivering dread that possessed all, under the expectation every moment of being dashed to fragments against the projecting rocks, or crushed by the debris that was carried tumultuously forward in the rush and whirl of the waters.

"Stick to your horses and take things easy!"

The voice of Lightning Jo seemed to come from a point a thousand yards away—whether above or below could not be told by the sound; but all knew that he was somewhere in the torrent, and there was something reassuring in the sound of his ringing voice in this general pandemonium of disaster and death. It encouraged more than the voice of despairing and helpless, and the clinging the more tightly and took some courage and hope.

"Jo, can you hear my voice?" called out Egbert Rodman, with the whole strength of his lungs.

"I reckon so," came back the instant answer.

"Tell me, then, whether you have Lizzie with you, or whether you know where she is."

"No; can't tell," thought you and her were together. We'll fetch up somewhere purty soon—daylight will come in the course of a week—and then we'll hunt for each other. No use till then—so you keep your mouth shut, and look out that you don't get your head cracked."

These seemed heartless words to Egbert; but they were really dictated by prudence and common sense, and he acted upon the advice, so far as it concerned the questioning of the scout.

The mustang of our young friend was swimming as well as he could down the *chute*, striving only to keep himself aloft. His body was beneath the water, his nose and head only appearing above. Up to this time Egbert had maintained his place upon his back, himself sinking of course to the armpits; but when he heard the warning words of Lightning Jo, he understood how the projecting point of some jagged rock might pass over his animal's head, and crush his own.

Accordingly he quietly slipped back over the animal's haunches, and submerged himself to his ears, held on to the tail of the animal, in a position of greater safety—if such a thing as safety can be named in reference to the party caught by the torrent in the canon.

Egbert had scarcely adopted this precautionary measure, when he had reason to thank Lightning Jo for the timely warning. Something grazed the top of his head, like the whiz of a cannon-ball, proving with what amazing velocity he was shooting down the canon.

"How can any one get out of this horrible place alive?" was the question he asked, as he realized the narrowness of his escape. "We must all be shattered to pieces before going much further. Ah!"

Just then a wild cry rung out above the din and roar of the waters—the cry of a strong man in his last agony. Driven as if by a columbad against some flinty projection, he had only time to make the shriek as the breath was driven from his body.

As this spinning downward through the chasm continued for several moments, Egbert endeavored to collect his senses and to think more calmly upon his terrible position.

He was morally certain that a number of the party had already lost their lives, and a twinge of anguish shot through his heart as he reflected upon the females and the tender children exposed to this perilous war of elements. And then, too, the wagon containing the remains of those who had fought so gallantly in Dead Man's Gulch—what a ghastly fate had overtaken them! It seemed, indeed, as if nature had joined with man in heaping unimagined horrors upon the heads of the weak and defenseless, and that nothing remained but to await shudderingly the fate that could not be postponed much longer.

But amid the rack and turmoil and swirl of the canon, the thought of his beloved Lizzie Manning would present itself, and he could not help wondering, doubting, fearing and hoping all in the same breath.

Was she living and had she survived the ordeal unharmed up to this time? Or had her gentle nature succumbed at the first shock? She had proven herself a heroine in Dead Man's Gulch, and was she equal to this? If still living, how much longer could she bear the strain upon her system?

But ere Egbert Rodman could conjecture any replies to these questions, he was called upon to make a still more desperate fight for his own life.

His mustang, encountering some obstruction, made such a sudden, furious plunge,

that his tail was drawn from the loose grasp of Egbert, who, aiming to renew it, clutched vaguely in the darkness and was unable to reach his faithful animal. He could hear him floundering and neighing close at hand, but there was no use of attempting to reach him, and he called to the horse, in the hope that he would succeed in making his way to him; but he was disappointed in this also, for the noise of the struggles speedily ceased, and he concluded that the faithful animal was dead.

Rather curiously the young man had clung to his rifle ever since he was caught by the water tornado, and now that he was somewhat cooler and more collected, he resolved that nothing but "death should them part." It was troublesome to swim with it grasped in one hand, but he was quite able to do it, where the current possessed such extraordinary velocity, and he moved forward with little effort on his part.

All this passed in a tenth part of the time taken by us in writing it, and Egbert Rodman had scarcely gained a connected idea of what was going on when he made the discovery that the channel through which he had been dashed was widening and considerably decreasing. The deafening crash that had been in his ears from the moment he was carried off his feet, now sunk to a dull noise, proving that he had emerged from the canon, and was floating over what might be termed a lake—caused, undoubtedly, by the widening of the pass through which Lightning Jo had attempted to guide the little party, with its two wagons.

With this discovery of the comparative calmness of the water, came, for the first time, something like returning hope to Egbert Rodman, who, feeling confident that there must be a tenable foothold at no great distance, began swimming forward regularly, so as to avoid being carried around in a circle.

Of course such a basin as this must have an outlet as well as an inlet, and it was his purpose to prevent himself being carried away into another similar canon, from which it was hardly possible to make such an escape over again.

This required severe effort, but happily it was accomplished sooner than was anticipated. While swimming vigorously forward, his feet touched bottom, and although scarcely able to maintain his foothold, yet by using arms and legs and grasping some branches that brushed his face, he succeeded in drawing himself out upon land, and found himself free from the flood.

"Saved at last, and thank God for it!" was his fervent ejaculation. "But what of the rest?—what of the women and children? and Lizzie—where can she be?"

All was of inky darkness about him, and he hardly dared to move for fear of plunging himself into some inextricable pitfall. Only by feeling every foot of the way as he advanced, did he manage to get away from the immediate neighborhood of the din and rush of waters.

Sinking down upon his knees, he crept along for some distance in this manner, until, as near as he could judge, he was in a sort of valley or ravine, much broader than the one in which he and his friends had been overwhelmed by the flood, and which seemed to have escaped the rush of water that had been driven through that.

Finding that it remained comparatively level, he finally rose to his feet again and advanced with more speed, but at the same time, with the caution due such a critical situation.

The wind was still blowing with a desolate, wailing sound, but the rain had ceased entirely; and the night, pitchy dark and cold, could not have been more desolate and cheerless.

"Halloa!" suddenly exclaimed the astonished Egbert, "yonder is a light as sure as the world! Who can be camping out to-night? Be he friend or foe, I must find out!"

And with this resolution he started toward the star-like beacon.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 121.)

ROYAL KEENE, THE California Detective: OR, The Witches of New York.

A ROMANCE OF FOUR GIRLS' LIVES.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND KIT," "WOLF DEMON," "ACE
OF SPADES," "RED MAZEPA," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.
A SUDDEN APPEARANCE.

CORALIE had risen to her feet when she beheld the strange effect of the potent drug upon the old man, and when her eyes beheld the legal-looking paper projecting from the breast-pocket of his overcoat, her quick wits at once conjectured that possibly it was what Van Rensselaer was in search of. For that he had some powerful motive for acting as he had in the matter she was sure. No common cause could actuate him. From the old man's story it was evident that he was strangely interested in the Van Rensselaer family.

Duped as she had been by David, and forced to carry out his designs despite herself, she saw here a chance to baffle his plans, perhaps in the end defeat them altogether.

If the paper was indeed the object of which Van Rensselaer was in quest, what a triumph it would be for her to frustrate him and preserve the perhaps precious document.

With puffed lips and a beating heart, Coralie stood in the center of the dingy room and looked upon the sleeping man. The thought came into her mind that Van Rensselaer might be watching her through the key-hole of the door. She was determined to secure the paper hidden in the old man's pocket, but to baffle Van Rensselaer's design, he must not suspect that she had taken it.

Coralie thought and acted quickly. She advanced to the old man and bent over him as if to assure herself that he was really sleeping. Then, with a rapid movement, she drew the folded paper from the pocket and thrust it into her bosom. Her back being to the door, the action was concealed from any one who might be watching there. A smile of triumph shone in the clear eyes of the girl as her fingers closed over the paper.

"It is mine," she murmured. "Now, keen plotter, if this is what you are in search of, your quest will be a fruitless one. The

tool you have chosen shall wound your hand, instead of aiding you in your design. He laughs best who laughs last; to-night it was your turn, to-morrow it will be mine."

Then she drew her veil down over her face again and walked straight to the door of the apartment.

As she approached it, it opened and Van Rensselaer appeared. As she had guessed, he had been on the watch.

"Does he sleep?" he asked, casting an anxious glance toward the couch where the motionless form of the old man was extended.

"Yes."

"Wait for me in the carriage. I shall not be long," he said.

She simply bowed her head, but made no reply. She left the room, walked along the passage-way and descended to the street. The hack now stood before the door.

"You need not wait for the others," Coralie said, determined to put Van Rensselaer to all the inconvenience in her power. Then she told the hackman to drive her to the corner of Twenty-third street and Broadway; something whispered to her that it was best not to give her address to the man.

Coralie entered the carriage, and the hackman, tired of waiting and anxious to get home, drove off without thinking for a moment that there was any thing wrong in so doing.

The young girl laughed, in triumph, as the carriage rolled on and she felt the paper safe within her bosom.

After Coralie's departure, Van Rensselaer turned to Bishop, who stood just outside the door.

"Keep watch at the door outside and prevent any one from disturbing me," he said.

"All right," Bishop answered.

Then Van Rensselaer closed the door, and was alone with his victim. With stealthy steps he approached the old man, yet there was little need of caution, for Hartright was as incapable of motion as the gorged Indian serpent supine in its native jungles.

"The drug has worked well enough," he muttered, as he looked upon the sleeper. He proceeded at once to search his pockets, but no will rewarded his efforts.

"By heaven! he has not brought it with him!" Van Rensselaer muttered, in wrath. "I shall only have my labor for my pains. Can he have entrusted it to other hands?" And his brows grew dark as he pondered over the question. "Impossible! he surely would not trust so precious a paper out of his possession. It may be concealed somewhere about his person."

Again Van Rensselaer bent over the sleeper. As he passed his hand carefully over the broad chest of the old man he felt something crumple at his touch, concealed within the vest.

"Aha! I have it!" he muttered. A gleam of joy came over his features. "There are some papers secreted within the lining of his vest," he continued. "At last I succeed. It's lucky that I thought to bring a knife with me." And, even as he spoke, he drew a sharp-edged bowie-knife from its sheath, which was fastened to a belt buckled around his waist.

He fastened the old man's vest and threw it open; then, with the keen-edged knife, he carefully ripped open the lining. Two folded papers lay exposed to his hand. Quickly he carried them to the table, and, by the light of the candle, examined them. A shade of disappointment came over his face as he saw what they were.

"Neither one is the will," he muttered, angrily. "What are they?" Philip Van Rensselaer to Sarah Gordon. A marriage certificate. The date, 1842. This is the proof of my father's first marriage. A record of the birth and baptism of Alice Gordon Van Rensselaer. That is the child mentioned in the will; the heir under that will to just one-half of my father's property. That villain, Keene, deceived me. These are the papers which, three years ago, I stashed my soul with crime to destroy. The papers which I burned up, which were in Keene's possession, were only copies; these are the originals. Oh! what a cursed idiot I have been! That crime was a useless one."

Then Van Rensselaer was silent for a moment, buried in thought. "Even if these papers are destroyed," he said, slowly, communing with himself, "this man can prove the identity of the child, Alice, if she be living, and something whispers me that she is. Her appearance, the will—which has escaped me—and his evidence would easily prove the child's identity without them. But if he should never wake from this deathlike sleep?" And Van Rensselaer glared hastily around him as he put the question which boded murder, as though he feared to see some shadowy form step from the darkness of the corners and answer his speech.

"Why should he not die here and now?" he muttered. "He is an old man, on the very verge of the grave; few years—perhaps hours—of life can he call his own. But the means?" Van Rensselaer again glared round him with a half-shudder.

Suddenly the thought came to him. "Suffocation!" he cried, in accents hardly above a whisper. "By simply winding my coat around his head he will die almost without a struggle. No marks to tell of the manner of his death. It must be so; this one crime, and then I'll stain my hand in blood no more. I can easily escape from the house. When they discover the body they will imagine that his death was produced by the drug in the liquor, and, to save themselves from suspicion, they will hush the matter up in some way."

With stealthy steps, Van Rensselaer approached the door and listened for a moment. Not a sound could he hear.

"If he should look through the keyhole, as I did?" the young man muttered, referring to Bishop.

And acting on the thought, he took from his pocket his handkerchief and fastened it around the knob of the door in such a manner that it hung down over the keyhole.

"It will be difficult to watch my movements from the outside now, I think," he said, with a grim smile. Then he removed his coat, and, holding it in his hands, carefully approached the helpless man extended on the sofa. Murder was in Van Rensselaer's heart and hand.

He bent over his destined victim, when a slight noise as though a mouse had run across the floor behind him, attracted his attention.

With a nervous shiver, for conscious guilt makes even the firm-nerved, stout-hearted villain liable to sudden fear when alone and surrounded by deathlike stillness,

Van Rensselaer turned; the coat had dropped from his hands upon the head of the sleeping man.

In the center of the room stood the Indian chief, erect like a statue, the dim light of the candle falling full upon his painted face.

A specter fresh from the shades below could hardly have startled the guilty soul of Van Rensselaer more than the sudden appearance of the Pawnee-Killer.

How he had gained access to the apartment was easily explained, for a small trap-door stood open just beyond the table and a flight of steps led down from it into the regions below.

In an instant it flashed upon Van Rensselaer's mind that the Indian had played the spy upon him, although he could not understand why the iron-like knuckles of the savage had struck him.

A single moment the New Yorker glared upon him; then, with a cry of rage, he plucked the bowie-knife from its sheath and sprung upon the intruder.

Quick as a cat, the savage evaded the blow by springing to one side, and then, as Van Rensselaer passed, carried on by his violent rush, he dealt him a terrible blow under the right ear that felled Van Rensselaer like a log to the floor, senseless.

CHAPTER XVII. THE TRAP-DOOR.

WHEN Van Rensselaer recovered from the effects of the terrible blow he found himself in darkness.

Slowly, little by little, his senses returned to him. He still felt a dull pain in his head, and on carrying his hand to it, discovered that there was a terrible lump under his ear where the iron-like knuckles of the savage had struck him.

Van Rensselaer rose to his feet, his brain still swimming from the effects of the blow. As he had said, he was in the darkness. How long he had lain upon the floor in his faint he knew not, for he felt certain that he was still in the room where he had fallen.

"Bishop!" he called, and his voice sounded harsh and unnatural.

The door opened, Van Rensselaer heard the creaking of the hinges, but no ray of light came into the room, which was not to be wondered at, for the entry-way was as dark as the unlighted room.

"Hallo! in the dark?" Bishop said, in astonishment, as he looked into the room, speaking in a cautious tone, as if afraid of waking the sleeper. "What have you been doing all this time? I got about tired of waiting. What made you put the light out?"

"Have you the lantern still lighted?" Van Rensselaer asked.

"Yes."

Bishop sent the bright rays flashing full upon Van Rensselaer's face, and as he caught sight of his pale and haggard features he uttered a cry of astonishment.

"Why, you look like a ghost!" he cried. Van Rensselaer replied not. He walked to the table, discovered that the candle was still there, and drawing a match from his pocket lit it.

As the dim rays illuminated the room another cry of astonishment came from Bishop's lips.

The sofa was empty; the sleeping man was gone!

Van Rensselaer's face grew paler still as he saw that both the savant and the valuable papers had disappeared.

"I am beaten," he muttered, in sullen anger.

"I don't understand," Bishop said, in wonder. "What have you done with the old man? I'll swear that no one passed by me, for I've kept close watch at the door ever since you came in." And as he spoke his eyes wandered around the room in search of another door; but the bare wall, unbroken, except by two windows securely barred by heavy shutters, alone met his gaze. He saw no visible outlet except by the two windows, and, from the thick coat of dust upon the bolts, it was evident that weeks if not months had elapsed since they had been opened.

"The events which have happened in this room since I entered it seem like a terrible dream more than like reality," Van Rensselaer said, in a husky voice, evidently laboring under strong emotions. "As I stood by the sleeping man, I heard a slight noise behind me; I turned and beheld that drunken Indian whom we encountered in the entry-way, standing in the center of the floor. When I advanced to him, he struck me a terrible blow under the ear which felled me senseless to the floor. When I came to my senses, I found myself in utter darkness, then I called you."

"How the deuce did he get in?" asked Bishop, in amazement.

"By a trap-door here," and Van Rensselaer took the candle and knelt in the center of the room. Bishop bent over him. The lines of the trap-door were plain to the eye.

"I wonder where it leads to?"

"We must open and examine. The Indian must have carried the old man away through this secret passage."

Van Rensselaer tried to open the trap-door, but the effort was in vain, he could not stir it.

Bishop then tried his hand but with as little success.

"I shouldn't imagine that it had been used for a year," he remarked.

"Then I have been mad, or drunk, or dreamed it all," Van Rensselaer said, dryly. "But see! look at the lines of the door. Do you not see that they are free from dust, while the cracks between the boards are full?"

"That's so, by jingo!" Bishop exclaimed, after a careful examination.

"It sticks, that is all. I'll try my knife and see if I can force it up."

The effort was successful; by the help of the knife point, Van Rensselaer raised the trap-door.

A deep, black void, into which led a pair of steps, met their eyes.

"You see this is the way by which the Indian came and by the same path he departed, taking the old man with him," Van Rensselaer said.

"Yes, but what object had he to mix himself up in the affair at all?"

"I do not understand it," Van Rensselaer replied, with frowning brows; "it is a most mysterious affair. But come; let us descend and see where this passage leads to. We may be able to find some clue to help us to unravel this tangled skein. Give me the lantern from the hand of

Bishop, Van Rensselaer descended the steps and the other followed him.

At the foot of the steps they found themselves standing in a square apartment, exactly the size of the one which they had just quitted. The room was partly filled with old boxes and barrels, and evidently had been used as a sort of store-room. The two windows like the ones in the room above, were barred with heavy shutters.

There was a door at one end of the room, evidently leading into the lower entry, but so long had it remained unused that the heavy bolts were rusted in their sockets.

"He didn't get out this way," Bishop said, in a tone of confidence, "nor yet by the windows. They haven't been used in a dog's age."

Then Van Rensselaer's eyes caught sight of a small door at the other end of the room, as he flashed the lantern around him.

"There is another door here," he said, and he proceeded to it. A cry burst from his lips as he examined it, for at the first glance he saw that the dust had been rubbed off the knob, thus proving beyond a doubt that a human hand had recently pressed it.

"Found something?" Bishop exclaimed, hastening after him.

"Yes, this door has been used, and recently."

"See where it leads to."

Van Rensselaer opened the door, and a small flight of steps stood revealed. The two ascended the stairs and found themselves at the end of the entry in which the door of room No. 1 was situated.

Puzzled, the two stopped.

"Well, if the Indian came up this way, he couldn't have got by me without my knowing it, much less carry a helpless man with him, and I never stirred from that door from the time that you went in until you called me," Bishop said, in wonder.

He had spoken the truth; there was but one mode of egress from the entry, and it was clearly impossible for any one to have got through the passage-way without his knowledge.

Van Rensselaer stared around him vacantly for a moment; the clear brain and cunning wits for once were puzzled.

"I can not understand it," he said, slowly.

"Suppose we go down-stairs to the saloon," suggested Bishop; "we might be able to discover something to explain this affair."

Van Rensselaer simply nodded his head, but made no other reply; his wits were wool-gathering.

The two descended to the saloon. The music, the dancing, and the drinking were still going on. The Indian at one end of the room was still beating upon the big drum.

Van Rensselaer sauntered carelessly up to the stage, and examined him carefully. The Indian did not seem to notice the inspection of the other.

After a long and earnest gaze, Van Rensselaer led the way to the open air.

"Well?" questioned Bishop, after they had gained the sidewalk.

"That Indian is not the one who struck me in the room above," Van Rensselaer said, decidedly. "He is shorter and thicker set; the other one was painted in close imitation to him, though. Are you sure that it was the real Indian that we encountered on the stairway?"

"Oh, yes, no doubt about it," Bishop answered, confidently.

"I am utterly at fault here," Van Rensselaer said, slowly.

Just then they turned the corner.

"Where's the carriage?" Bishop exclaimed.

"Gone!" Van Rensselaer said, in astonishment.

"Well, this is the queerest adventure!" Van Rensselaer observed. "The driver probably got tired waiting, and having one passenger, drove off with her."

"That's so—that is reasonable."

"We'll strike straight for Broadway and then home. I must have time to think over this night's work," Van Rensselaer said, gloomily.

The two proceeded onward.

CHAPTER XVIII.
THE DETECTIVE.

A SMALL, cozy room on the fourth story in the St. Nicholas Hotel, fronting on Broadway.

On the bed lay the old savant, Elizur Hartright. His overcoat was still on, nothing of his outward gear removed except his hat. He was buried in a profound slumber, although the morning sun was shining brightly in the window.

The lips of the old man moved, his heavy breathing became irregular; he was shaking off the deathlike trance which the powerful drug administered in the wine of the dance-house had brought upon his senses.

Slowly—little by little—he awoke.

His dazed glance wandered around in evident amazement. Then, with a sudden and powerful effort, he cast aside the lingering remnants of the spell which had bound all his faculties in a leaden chain, and rose to a sitting posture on the bed.

Again he looked around him, saw that he was in his own room, on his own bed; then he surveyed himself and saw that he was fully dressed as if for the street.

"Have I been mad during the night?" he cried, in wonder, "or is all this but a terrible dream? Let me recount what has happened. First, I went to the masquerade; saw there a woman dressed in black and closely veiled; heard her voice as she passed me, and fancied that in her tones I heard again the voice of my long-lost Alice. Acting on a sudden impulse, I followed the woman, managed to gain speech with her, and after a few minutes' conversation became satisfied that fate had at last in this strange way thrown into my path the girl whom I once loved as if she had been my own child. I asked her to let me see her face, knowing that that would at once confirm my suspicion or convince me that I had made a mistake. She consented on condition that I should leave the ball-room and go with her. I agreed to this at once. We set out in a carriage. The carriage stops and we enter a desolate-looking house. I tell her the story of Alice Van Rensselaer, and explain that I think that she is the child that is not. Then I drink a glass of wine at her request; she removes her veil and I behold the face of Sarah Gordon, the woman whom I loved and lost long years ago; after that comes a blank. I can remember nothing more. And now I wake and find myself upon my own bed with the

morning sun streaming in full upon me. I can not understand it. It all seems like a terrible dream. I wonder what time it is?"

The old man looked at his watch. It had stopped; the hands pointed to half-past six. "It must be later than that," he murmured, rising to his feet and proceeding to the window. The crowded state of the street convinced him that the day was no longer young.

A tap at the door attracted his attention. "Come in," he said.

A servant entered, bearing a card, and with the message that the gentleman desired to see him at once upon important business.

"James Bright." The old gentleman thought for a moment, but he could not remember that he had ever heard the name before. "Show him up, please."

In a few moments Mr. James Bright entered the room.

"Mr. Hartright?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

"My name is James Bright; I am a detective officer."

"A detective officer?" and the savant looked astonished.

"Yes, sir; you passed through some rather peculiar adventures last night, I believe." The cool and confident tone used by the detective completely astounded the old gentleman.

"Yes, sir; I confess I myself am really unable to state exactly what did happen to me last night."

"I can give you about all the particulars, I guess. You went to a masquerade ball last night, met a veiled woman there, went with her in a hack to a dance-house in Water street—"

"A dance-house?" exclaimed Hartright, in wonder.

"Exactly; the woman, though, was as ignorant as yourself regarding the character of the place. She was but a tool in the hands of another. There you drank a glass of drugged wine, and from that time to this all is a blank to you."

"The wine was drugged, then? I understand now the strange stupor which overcame my senses. I have traveled in India, sir, for nearly twenty years; have met the Thugs with their silken nooses of slaughter right in their native jungles; but they are harmless compared with the Thugs of this great city; at least my adventures last night would seem to say so," Hartright said, seriously.

"And you were robbed last night."

"Robbed?"

The old gentleman felt of his watch, then placed his hand upon his pocket-book.

"My watch and pocket-book are safe—"

"But you have some valuable papers, I believe."

The savant looked at the detective in utter amazement.

"How could you know that?" he asked.

"My dear Mr. Hartright, it is our business to know a little of almost every thing," the detective replied, smiling.

"But are the papers safe?"

Hartright felt for the will in his breast-pocket, then for the papers sewed up in the lining of his vest.

"They are gone!" he cried; "my vest has been ripped open and the valuable papers relating to the birth of my lost Alice are stolen. Another paper has also been taken from the breast-pocket of my overcoat."

"Three papers gone?"

"Yes."

"The marriage-certificate of Philip Van Rensselaer and Sarah Gordon, the record of baptism of the child of that union, Alice, and the will of Philip Van Rensselaer, wherein he bequeaths fifty thousand dollars to David and Clara, and fifty thousand dollars to Alice Gordon Van Rensselaer," the detective said.

"How is it possible that you should know the contents of these papers?" asked the savant, in wonder. "Particularly the division of the property made by the will. Even I am a stranger to that, for it is still sealed up, just as I received it from Philip Van Rensselaer."

"Our secrets are our stock in trade, Mr. Hartright," the detective said. "No matter how I gained my information; rest assured that it is correct."

"But who could have stolen these papers?" asked Hartright, bewildered.

"What person in this world has an interest in having all proof of the birth of Alice Van Rensselaer destroyed?" Bright asked.

"I can not guess."

"I can; I'm on the trail and

THE GIRL WHO GAVE ME THE MITTEN.

BY ARNOLD ISLER.

She was as beautiful and as fair
As the flowers that bloom in May-time;
Her voice was as charming and as sweet
As the nightingale's song in May-time.
Bright smiles were ever playing on her lips
Of the bewitching, dark-eyed kitten;
The girl who, other night had the pleasure
Of giving "Yours truly" the mitten.
My once fond hopes have faded away;
From scenes of pleasure I've parted;
I'm no longer the festive boy I was,
I feel lonely, yes, broken-hearted;
Sadness has taken possession of me,
My poor heart feels terribly bitten!
Oh, could I how could I then so cruel be,
As to let her give me the mitten?
I told her of a pleasant home I own
On the banks of a crystal river;
And I asked her if she would marry me,
If she would be mine forever.
But alas! for the hours wasted in love,
Alas! for the heart that's been smitten:
The girl whom I swore I'd ever adore,
Has cruelly given me the mitten.
I'll leave the place; yes, I'll wander afar,
I'll cross the billowy ocean;
I'll carry a sword and rise as a star,
In war's terrific commotion;
But, still I know I never can forget
That pretty little dark-eyed kitten;
For in my memory I will ever find
The girl who gave me the mitten.

Tracked to Death:
OR,
THE LAST SHOT.BY CAPT. MAYNE REID,
AUTHOR OF "HELPLESS HAND," "LOVE RANCHER,"
"SCALP HUNTERS," "WHITE CHIEF," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

FLEEING FROM A SPECTER.

RICHARD DARKE had run away in wild terror from what he believed to be a corpse, lying under the shadow of trees in a Mississippi forest. Still more terrified was his retreat from what he fancied to be a specter, seen upon an open prairie of Texas. For now to his own guilty conscience was added the awe of the supernatural.

The head of the man he had murdered, rising out of the earth, his face seen in full moonlight, his eyes glaring upon him—the murderer—the lips pronouncing his name, and branding him with the crime!

How could he be otherwise than awed? And he was awed, paled, almost stricken senseless with fear. No wonder his lost guidance of his horse, permitting the animal to take its own way.

It, too, shared in the scare. The unnatural appearance of a head without a body; the proximity of wolves; the nervous shock felt by its rider, communicated to itself; the cry coming up from the earth; all combined to affright the horse as much as his master.

From the weird spot he galloped away, as if the prairie were on fire behind him!

For a time his rider made no effort to check his speed, or in any way guide him. It was as much as he could do to keep his seat in the saddle. His limbs felt weak, and his knees loose at the joints. His hands, too; the fingers nerveless, with scarce enough muscular strength to retain grasp of the bridle-rein.

His spirit was weakest of all, though his heart was beating strong enough. It thundered against his ribs, as if struggling to burst forth from his breast.

The horse galloped on, he knew not, reeled not, whither. After the encounter with Simeon Woodley, so unexpected, so inopportune, he had been troubled with a presentiment of impending fate. But now that the other world had taken up the case against him; now that its spirits were appearing—a ghost in earthly guise calling out his name and accusing him of his crime—it was no longer a presentiment, but a certainty. Too surely was Nemesis pursuing!

Utterly prostrated by the appalling thought, he permitted his horse to gallop on. He did not even make an effort to retain his seat in the saddle; and, perhaps, would have fallen out of it, but for long practice and habit, that made the thing mechanical.

It was only when the animal, becoming tranquilized after its own scare, and jaded with the prolonged retreat, came to a stop, that the power of thought returned to its rider.

Then reflecting, or trying to reflect, he fancied it must be a dream. In his drunken slumber he had been dreaming—had visions quite as strange as this—terrible phantasmas—groups in tableau, with Charles Clancy pre-eminent among the fleeing figures. Was he still asleep, and the sight of a bodiless head but a continuation of them? Or was he awake and—

Oh, God! I am awake. What can it mean? Am I mad?

Thus spoke the conscience-stricken criminal, after his horse had come to a halt, and he sat, staring wildly around him. He no longer knew where he was, and even doubted what he was.

For a time he kept his seat in the saddle, reflecting on the spectacle lately seen, and endeavoring to account for it. His horse, long famishing, had dropped his head, and was picking at the scant grass.

The moon was still shining clear, but now nearer the horizon. He faced round to the direction whence he had come. He saw his own shadow, with that of his horse projected far over the plain. That was the side on which he had seen the specter; and there was his fear. Would the ghostly thing once more make its appearance? Would the head of Charles Clancy again rise up out of the earth and shout:

"Richard Darke—murderer?" No—no—no! It all had been a fancy—a torrent of delirium tremens—such as he had experienced before more than once. Glad to think it was but this, he dismounted, with the intention to stay there for the rest of the night. He could do no better, having now completely lost his way.

He was about drawing off the bridle, to give his hungry horse to the grass, when his glance was again directed along their shadows; now, with the declining moon, projected still further over the plain. But at the point where they terminated—just over his own head—there was something seen, not visible, or not noticed, by him before.

It was a mere speck of somber color. It might be a stunted tree, or rocky ledge, cropping above the level of the plain? One or other of these he at first fancied it to be, the fancy giving him satisfaction. But as he continued to gaze upon it, he saw cause to change his mind. It was neither rock, nor tree, nor any thing fixed

upon the plain, but something moving over it!

Gradually the shadow of his own head and the dark speck were drawing nearer one another. It was not this that led him to think the latter was in motion. For the moon was still declining in the sky, and, of course, his own shadow becoming more elongated. But, just as the two came in contact, meeting upon the silvered surface of the prairie, there was a flash from the far-off form, as if the moonbeams were reflected upon a bit of looking-glass.

More likely the blade of a knife, or from the barrel of a gun?

In this alternative shape did Richard Darke interrogate himself about the shining object.

In either case there must be a man behind it.

As he stood scrutinizing it, his eyes strained to the utmost, he made out the figure of a man mounted upon a horse. The horseman was heading toward him, coming on at quick speed, as if prompted by some terrible determination.

It seemed the Destroying Angel! He did not stay to inquire further. Long before the approaching horseman was near, he had gathered up his reins, sprung back into the saddle, and was spurting over the plain as if his life depended upon speed!

CHAPTER XXVI.

RIDING AT THE MOON.

SOON after Jupiter's shadow came over Clancy's head, the latter could see his own projected far out upon the plain. It was no longer the spherical silhouette of his head, but of his whole body, from crown to heel.

For the mulatto had released him from his irksome confinement; and once more he breathed freely.

He was feeble. But for this Jupiter administered a medicine that quite restored his strength—some brandy brought away from the robbers' rendezvous.

The fugitive's story was soon told; how he had deceived the prairie pirates, and in the end got away from them; and how Brasfort had enabled him to return upon the trail as far as a solitary tree which he remembered. Then the hound had started off, and outrunning, got ahead of him. He had followed by guess; and by good luck had ridden in the right direction.

Clancy listened impatiently, scarce waiting for the end of the tale. His vengeance was still unsatisfied; his vow unfulfilled. The man who had caused all his misery was yet alive. He had just parted from the spot, and might be near?

Whether near or afar, he must be followed and found.

Once more taking possession of his horse, and appropriating the arms which Jupiter had stolen from the tents, he prepares to set forth. The mulatto, now afoat, can not keep pace with him, and is directed to stay behind. Clancy promises to come back, knowing he can find him. But, first, he must find Richard Darke—find and kill him. He has no fear about the result. Something whispers him, he will now succeed. Despite the many disappointments, he believes it to be a fate.

Taking hurried leave of his faithful follower, he once more sets his hand upon the trail. The scent is fresh, and the animal lifts it in a rapid run.

At like rate of speed the horse follows, though not going in a gallop. His rider knows that this would not do. The hoof-stroke must not be heard by him he is starting to track up.

Galloping it surely would be—too soon. He does not need to resort to this mode of making progress. His horse is a natural "pacer," a gait peculiar to the steeds of Louisiana, whence he has been brought. He can pace as fast as a Northern horse could trot—almost as fast as one can gallop.

In the smooth amble the horse makes little noise—not much more than the hound. Both glide over the turf silently as specters. Nearly an hour passes without any result. But Clancy knows that he is going in the right direction, having confidence in his canine guide. The behavior of Brasfort gives him assurance that he is not being led astray.

Before long his trust becomes verified. Although not in a direct line, the trail has hitherto led toward that point of the plain where the declining moon appears as if about to sink below the horizon. Outlined, almost against her disk, Clancy perceives a form, easily distinguishable as that of a man on horseback. Though seen athwart the moonbeams, and by their mystic light magnified to gigantic size, he is not deceived. He has no thought of its being either giant or phantom.

For in like proportion the same light magnifies a plumed aureole around the horseman's head. He knows that its wearer is Richard Darke.

He no longer needs help from the nose of his hound. He must put all his trust in the heels of his horse.

"At last!" he says, the colloquy words passing through closed teeth. "At length I have him, the villain, in view; and if I mistake not, within reach. Now, mother, you shall be avenged! Either that, or I join you!"

While speaking, he releases the hound from muzzle and leash. He has done with stealthy tracking, and resolves to ride straight on toward his enemy—to come up with him, kill him, or be himself killed.

Next moment he is going at a gallop—in full stretch across the plain. He sees that the other is galloping too, retreating.

It is a question of speed between the two horses, for the result of which Clancy has no fear. He has full confidence in the steed he is bestriding; knows it to be one of the strongest and swiftest. For these qualities had he chosen it before leaving the States; with anticipation that they might some time stand him in stead.

He has neither whip nor spur. If he had, there would be no need for him to use them. His horse sees the other horse ahead, divines the wish of his rider, and gallops as if ridden in a race.

On, over the moonlit plain, glide the two horsemen, as fast as their horses can carry them.

Alike silent pursuer and pursued, but with reflections far different. The former knows who is before; the latter can not tell who is following.

Richard Darke—for it is he who is chased—looks back with dread. He is once more seized by the horrid fancy that he has seen a spectral head—the head of him he had murdered. Now it is the whole body—the complete ghost that is coming after him!

Driving the spurs still deeper into his horse's flanks, he gallops on, keeping a straight course. It is toward the moon, whose lower limb now touches the horizon of the plain. He rides as if intending to plunge into her disk, and there seek safety from the spectral pursuer. But, ride as he will, he perceives that the latter is gaining upon him—gradually lessening the space between. He sees it with shuddering and the faintest of despair.

Still galloping on, he surveys the ground in front, to right, to left, everywhere, in search of a place to conceal himself. The speed of his horse can not serve him. He must seek safety under cover of some hind. His glance sweeps the horizon in quest of trees. There are none on that sterile expanse—not so much as a shrub, only patches of artemisia, that would not give concealment to a hare.

In the last moments of his agony something looms up in front, obscuring the light of the moon—for a moment concealing her disk. It has the outlines of a rock rising above the level of the plain. It is a rocky spur.

He heads toward it, and spurs his horse to a last desperate stretch. He succeeds in reaching and getting on its further side. There he halts, and awaits the coming up of the pursuer.

But, notwithstanding his wild terror, he has still resolution left to grasp his gun and raise it in readiness to send a bullet through the thing pursuing, whether it be mortal man or spirit disembodied.

Stayed by no supernatural fancies, but urged on by purely human passions, Clancy continues the pursuit. His heart bounds with joy as he perceives he is lessening the distance that separates him from the man he is pursuing. He will soon be able to satisfy the thirst that has so long tortured him. It is no mean, selfish revenge that moves him, but a purer impulse to mete out punishment and seek just retaliation.

Inspired by it, he rides desperately on. He, too, appears as if about to plunge into that silvery circle whose circumference seems to rest upon the edge of the moon.

All at once the moon's disk disappears; something coming between and screening it from his sight. He sees that it is a rock, at the same time that Richard Darke has taken refuge behind it.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 97.)

"A Friend In Need."

BY WALTER A. ROSE.

"You may call Atick out of the stove-hole now, Raynor, and send him about his work; I dare say the sweltering heat below has taught him the error of disobedience by this time."

"Very good, sir; but I should recommend you to discharge the fellow when we get back to Hong-Kong, for I'm inclined to think he's an evil-disposed rascal, and if he felt inclined to be revengeful, it is quite possible for him to send us all to kingdom come by tampering with the engine."

I was chief-engineer of the Mona, a fine steamer plying upon the eastern coast of China, and the person with whom I held the foregoing conversation, as we emerged from the cabin after dinner, was my first assistant in the same vessel. The man, Atick, to whom our words referred, was one of the oilers, for those were palmy days in the Flowery Land, and a white man was never expected to perform arduous labor, except in a case of emergency. All the firemen and coal-trimmers were also Chinese, and very efficient ones they were, too, for they could stand the heat and never shirked their work; but, of course, they did not receive the same pay as the oilers, many of whom understood the working of the engines as well as I did myself. The man Atick was a smart fellow, but he was inclined to be impertinent at times, and it was on account of his having given me "a back-answer," that I had condemned him to toil for several hours in the stove-hole—a severe punishment, as, in addition to the labor, the culprit's *amour propre* was injured.

The Mona was on her passage from Swatow to Amoy, and the weather was delightfully fine, so I sauntered upon the upper deck to enjoy my post-prandial cigar and a chat with the passengers, one of whom was a friend of some three years' standing. And a very pleasant friend indeed was Winifred Ward, for, in addition to her personal charms, she possessed many accomplishments, and among which was the faculty of conversing sensibly upon almost every topic of interest. I had known her father, who was a civil-service employee in Hong-Kong, for a long time, but it was not until Miss Ward's education was completed and she came to China to reside with her parents, that I had the pleasure of making her acquaintance.

At the period of which I now speak, Winifred had just emerged from her teens, had burst into bloom like a beautiful flower, and filled our senses with delight. Those who dared indulge the familiarity were wont to call her the "Pocket Venus," she was so *petite*, yet so lovely, for she could easily have passed under a five-foot standard, and was light as a fairy; though, when weighed in the balance of men's minds against more stately members of her sex, the scale invariably turned in her favor. She loved me—I could easily discern that she did so—though for what reason I knew not, for I was but a crude, rough fellow, after all, and but little learned in the various branches of *politesse* which ladies most admire. However, it was so, and I knew it, and that knowledge did much to soften the hardness of my nature and teach me to hope for happiness, which otherwise I should never, even in my wildest dreams, have considered attainable. Although I determined to make all the headway in the sea of her affections that I could during our passage up the coast of China, I considered that it would be better for me to defer making any formal offer of my hand and heart to Winifred until she was once more domiciled beneath her father's roof, for the old gentleman had intrusted his daughter to my care—she was going to visit some friends in Fuh-chen—and I thought that perhaps he might consider I had taken an unfair advantage, and so acquire an antipathy to me which might prove fatal to my aspirations.

We arrived at Amoy in due course of time and I had the pleasure of showing my pretty charge the terribly dirty city and enjoying with her a ride to the race-course at Quemoa; after which we again returned to the Mona and again started upon our journey northward. At dusk we rounded Turn-

about Island, and, an hour afterward passed Ocsen and stood toward Lam-yit, a series of sterile islets which lie near the northern entrance to the Hae-tan Straits and which are only inhabited by fishermen and coast-marauders.

It was a glorious night! The sea, unruffled by the lightest breeze, lay glistening in the moonlight like a polished silver salver; even the peaks of the dark rocks upon our larboard hand were tipped with light and the cloudless heavens above seemed literally ablaze with shimmering stars. The Mona was making good headway, but as I stood near the smoke-stack on the upper deck, I wondered a little thereat, for she did not seem to be carrying a full head of steam, as none was escaping through the waste-pipe. Although Mr. Raynor was on duty, and I knew him to be a careful man, I was about to go below and satisfy myself that every thing was *comme il faut*, when Miss Ward, who was passing the poop-deck, approached.

"Mr. Dalton, do come and look over the stern; it is positively splendid to watch the phosphorescent eddies the vessel leaves behind; they seem to reflect a myriad moonbeams, each one endeavoring to outshine the rest. I want some one to share my admiration, and I know you are the only person who can fully appreciate what I feel as I gaze down into the deep," she said.

Who could have resisted such a request, especially when accompanied by a smile as sweet as that which the pretty speaker vouchsafed me? Miss Ward linked her arm in mine, we walked to the taffrail, and, leaning over, contemplated the white wake of our fast-speeding vessel. My fair companion launched forth in praise of the beauties of ocean, and I listened, enraptured by the silvery cadence of her voice, for some moments, until it suddenly became obvious to me that the Mona was forging ahead with unusual rapidity. Yet I could hear no sound of escaping steam, and so I turned to Winifred.

"Excuse me, Miss Ward; duty calls me from you for a moment; I will return shortly," I said.

Ere the words died upon my lips, ere I could withdraw my arm from that of the girl beside me, a crash, a roar, as of a thousand cannon, broke upon my ear, the deck seemed to recede from beneath my feet and I felt myself and Winifred, to whom I clung, hurled into space.

The vessel's boiler had exploded!

In the short space of a second that fact dawned in its entirety upon me; ere another thought could succeed it, I found myself struggling in the flowing tide, the seething waters of which in agitation sought to draw me down to death. At that awful moment I thought not of myself, I heeded not the fate of my shipmates. All my hopes, my thoughts were concentrated in the desire to rescue the dear girl whom I had learned to love from the peril which she had shared with me. We had sunk deep, tight locked in each other's arms, she clinging to me with the fierce energy of despair, I holding her fast, even in death, she should be severed from me. As we rose to the surface, I dashed aside the salt, soft tresses of my darling, for they blinded me, and gazed over the silvery sea.

Gone!

Yes, gone forever to her grave beneath the waves, bearing with her lusty lads which had been true to me for years. Nevermore would she bound proudly over the sparkling surges, nevermore would her pennant flutter in the breeze, or light-voiced laughter ring along her decks, for only a few floating timbers marked the Mona's tomb.

"Arthur!"

It was my sweet one's voice. She was uninjured, she had not even swooned, as I had supposed, for, though weak in body, she was strong in heart and she had faith in me. I heard it in the tone of her voice, I felt it as she pressed her sea-wet lips to my pallid cheek.

"Courage, darling; with God's aid, I will save you yet!"

A silvery moonbeam glinting upon a black object floating slowly toward where I was upholding Winifred gave me hope. So light was my burden that I swam easily; up I went and placed my pet upon it. A large portion of the Mona's wheel-house it proved to be, and well capable of sustaining the weight of several persons. When I had scrambled upon it, I gazed around, hoping I might be able to descry some of my late comrades and endeavor to render them aid. But that they had all succumbed to the Mighty Destroyer I soon became convinced, though once I fancied I saw a figure float past on piece of wreck.

Heavily and wearily the hours dragged away their length; the moon sunk down beneath the hills that formed a strong, dark background to the islets toward which we were drifting slowly—ah! how slowly!—upon the midnight tide. My dear girl's courage was indomitable, and she sustained mine by taking a hopeful view of matters, made me happy in my misery—for how could I feel otherwise than sad, when the knowledge that so many of my friends had suddenly been called from earth was fresh upon me?—by throwing off all restraint in that hour of peril, trial and suffering, and frankly avowing that she loved me with a fervor only equalled by my own affection for her sweet self.

Uprose, a harbinger of Hope, bright Venus from the foam that gave her birth, soon, however, to pale and fade in the gold and amber glow that suffused the eastern sky, as Phoebus whirled his chariot into view and banished gloomy shadows from the wakening earth. We were floating toward one of the larger islets, and, not long after sunrise, our life-preserver grounded upon a sand-bar a few fathoms from the shore. I had but little difficulty in carrying Winifred to land, though we encountered much in clambering up the jagged, weed-ozy rocks which lined the base of the island.

At length, however, we gained an elevation and looked anxiously around for some signs of habitations. A few fishermen's huts, about three miles distant along the beach, were the only dwellings we could descry; and toward these we accordingly bent our footsteps, not without many misgivings, however, as to the sort of welcome likely to be accorded to us.

Footsore and weary were we on arrival at these rude huts. I entered the first one, and my astonishment may be imagined when I found that its solitary occupant was Atick, late oiler aboard the ill-fated Mona. The fellow's amazement was as great as mine, and, as he expressed himself highly gratified to see me safe, and accounted for his presence by asserting that he had reached the shore in like manner to Miss

Ward and myself, I was glad that he had been spared, thinking his services might prove valuable. I learned from him that the fishermen were all absent, probably at sea, and that the only thing he could find to eat was some rice and dried fish, though water, fortunately, was not scarce. He seemed much pleased when he saw Winifred, and said that he did not doubt that the natives would treat us well, if we paid them; but, as they were all pirates, they would expect a ransom before they transported us to their friends.

Atick lighted a fire and managed to concoct a sort of fish-stew, which, though not very palatable, was acceptable, for we were famishing with hunger. After Winifred and I had partaken of the *potage*, we stretched ourselves upon a couple of trestle-beds, and, being thoroughly worn out by fatigue, the drowsy god soon took full possession of our senses.

In dreamland, my visions were not pleasant ones. Again the steamer exploded, again I was struggling with the tide and in my arms my darling. Then the scene changed and I thought I was in a dense forest, in which the wild beasts glared at me with hungry eyes, and serpents poised their heads and hissed their venom in my face. One, a Python, seized me quick as lightning, twining his flexuous folds around me. Startled, I awoke—awoke to find myself securely bound with coir cords that environed my body and the couch on which I lay! I glanced around the apartment. Winifred was peacefully sleeping, unconcerned. I called to her and she arose.

"Good heavens, Arthur! what can be the meaning of this?" she cried, as she sprang toward me, with the evident intention of setting free my limbs.

"Hold! Go near to him and I kill you both!" cried Atick, suddenly presenting himself and speaking his own vernacular with measured emphasis, as he raised a fishing-spear to enforce his mandate.

"Hearken!" he added, his little jet-black eyes scintillating with evil light. "Aboard the steamer you punished me, you degraded me, and the men—my comrades—jested about it. Where are they? How are you? They are dead; you are in my power! I caused the Mona's boiler to burst. I weighted the safety-valve, and went far forward out of the way—that was how I escaped. I thought I was avenged. I thought you dead, until I found you here. Better so. I can now sell you to the pirates, the chief of whom will pay liberally for the pretty white woman. I will not hurt her, unless she attempts to release you."

I tried to expostulate with him, for Winifred's sake; but the brute was inflexible, and I feared the worst. Soon after dusk the sound of flapping sails and the harsh cries of the sailors told us some of the pseudo-fishermen were returning to their rendezvous. Atick was afraid to leave us and go to meet them, lest Winifred should meanwhile free me, so he was fain content himself by standing at the door and hailing the head man to come to him. Presently I heard them conversing together. Atick, a scoundrel, knew he would raise himself in the estimation of the marauders by recounting his exploit, so, for probably the first time in his life, he told the truth, ending by offering to sell both his prisoners—our luckless selves—for the modest sum of two hundred dollars.

"I must see them first," said the pirate chief, in his native tongue.

He entered the room in which we were, accompanied by Atick, struck fire with a flint and steel, lighted a small lamp, went close to Winifred and scrutinized her carefully. He seemed pleased with her beauty, for he uttered a few words of commendation. Then he advanced to where I was lying and placed the lamp for an instant so close to my face that the glare blinded me. The next moment he drew a knife, quickly severed the cords that held me, and ended by plunging the glittering blade hilt-deep in Atick's side.

"Traitor, fool!" he cried, gnashing his teeth in fury, as my late captor fell, writhing in agony, upon the floor, "this man is my father; he is a good man, and you have maltreated him. Once he saved my life, and every thing I have is his. Die! it is your just punishment."

Wondering greatly, I raised the lamp and gazed in the face of the stranger. I recognized his features instantly. He had once been the river Min pilot of the Mona, and during our sojourn at Pagoda anchorage, some years previous, he had been knocked overboard and stunned by a hawser that parted. I had dived after and rescued him, and he had not forgotten the obligation.

That night Winifred and I were made as comfortable as possible in the pirate's hut, and the following day we were transported in safety to Fuh-chen, while Atick's corpse lay bleeding on the Lam-yit beach.

My wife, Winifred, and I still remember with gratitude the pirate chief, who proved to be indeed "a friend in need."

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